

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 31, 2017

CONTACT

Tracy Frampton, Executive Director

321.255.2213

tracy@floridawildlifehospital.org

Rehabilitated Otter Experiences Freedom in Brevard County

PALM SHORES, Fla., August 31, 2017 – Florida Wildlife Hospital (FWH) released a North American River Otter today. She and an unrelated female arrived at FWH in April of this year. Both were orphans and were housed together for most of their time at FWH. Sadly, the second otter passed away suddenly several weeks ago. Wild animals hide illness well in order to prevent becoming a meal for another animal. She hid her pneumonia until it was beyond treatment.

Happily, the otter released today remained healthy throughout her time at FWH. During her four month stay, she had a lot to learn. Swimming was her first challenge to overcome. Catching live fish in her pool was the next skill to learn. Once fishing was mastered, it was time to start learning how to catch food that bites back: crabs! The first stage was catching fiddler crabs. They are small so not terribly difficult to catch once she was used to their small nips. Then, the challenge level was increased by offering her large, live blue crabs. This challenge was more difficult because those claws can create a lasting impression. She mastered all the skills necessary for survival in the wild.

"Naive otters are more successful if they have other otters to help them learn the ropes of making a living in the wild," said FWH director, Tracy Frampton. "It was important that we release her where other otters are known to live." Early this morning, she was transported to an undisclosed location on the Banana River where fresh otter scat was seen as recently as 3 days ago. The homeowner was happy to share his dock for such a momentous occasion. We hope he will catch a view of her sunning on his dock for some time to come.

The cost of raising one otter until its release can reach several thousand dollars. Donations to help cover the cost of care of this otter and other patients at the hospital are greatly appreciated. Go to www.floridawildlifehospital.org for more information or to make a donation.

Photos and video:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/6bilat30hfvsm4w/AAAVCDLGXiP4gYrbpyYgRYdxa?dl=0>

###

The Florida Wildlife Hospital & Sanctuary is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to aiding sick, injured and orphaned native Florida wildlife and migratory birds, and to return them to the ecosystem. The Florida Wildlife Hospital is open to admit patients 365 days a year and treats approximately 5,000 patients each year.