



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Giant sea creatures invade Brevard County

MELBOURNE, Fla., OCTOBER 12, 2015 – A few weeks ago, a drop-cloth-covered octopus named Octavia was wheeled off a trailer into its new home at Brevard Zoo. As part of Washed Ashore, a temporary exhibit featuring ten larger-than-life sculptures crafted from marine debris, this eight-armed cephalopod and her kin serve as reminders of the very real dangers waste poses to our oceans.

“Washed Ashore works on so many levels; aesthetically, these sculptures are absolutely gorgeous,” said Andrea Hill, the Zoo’s marketing and communications director. “But once you take a closer look and realize they’re made up of everyday items that were found in the ocean, it makes you think. We’re hoping Washed Ashore will start a conversation, as all great works of art do.”

The Washed Ashore Project is a non-profit, community-based organization dedicated to educating and creating awareness about marine debris and plastic pollution through art. Washed Ashore is a project of The Artula Institute for Arts & Environmental Education, whose mission is to provide opportunities to express and teach environmental issues through the arts. The sculptures were crafted under the tutelage of Oregon-based artist and educator Angela Haseltine Pozzi, who enlisted the help of her community to bring the exhibit to life. In the past few years, the Washed Ashore Project has worked with zoos, aquariums and other cultural institutions across the country to spread awareness of the impact marine debris has on marine animals.

The Zoo plans to augment the exhibit with its own signage and activities related to local conservation initiatives such as proper fishing line disposal, sea turtle rehabilitation and the Perdido Key beach mouse breeding program. An artificial beach display will educate guests on the most responsible choices to make when playing in, on or near the ocean.

Washed Ashore runs from November 8, 2015 to May 8, 2016 and will be open from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily; entry is included with general Zoo admission. The exhibit is presented by Bright House Networks and sponsored by Surfing’s Evolution and Preservation Foundation, PNC, Publix Super Markets Charities and Parrish Medical Center.

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Brevard Zoo is a not-for-profit organization and a leader in wildlife conservation and education. The Zoo is home to more than 732 animals representing 180 species located in Florida, South America, Africa, Asia and Australia and accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. The Zoo features many extraordinary animal experiences including giraffe and lorikeet feedings, African kayak tours, paddle boats in the wetlands and a train ride.

Brevard Zoo is open daily from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The last admission is at 4:15 p.m. Treetop Trek is open daily at 8 a.m. The last admission is 3 p.m. for the Treetop Challenge Course and 3:30 p.m. for the Canopy Walk and Chutes and Ladders courses. Parking is always free. Twenty-five cents of every admission to Brevard Zoo supports the Zoo's conservation projects through Quarters for Conservation. Group discounts and adventure packaging are available. Brevard Zoo and Treetop Trek are a half-mile east of I-95 at exit 191 on Wickham Road in Melbourne – 25 minutes from the Melbourne International Airport and 45 minutes from the Orlando International Airport. For more information, please call (321) 254-WILD.