

## **\*\*\*MEDIA ADVISORY\*\*\***

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### **FAU Harbor Branch Marine Mammal Research and Conservation Program Attempts to Save Stranded Whales**

**FORT PIERCE, Fla. (March 4, 2013)** – The FAU Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute (HBOI) Marine Mammal Research and Conservation (MMRC) Program along with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Busch Wildlife Sanctuary and Jensen Beach State Park officials responded to reports of two stranded whales late yesterday afternoon on Jensen Beach. The animals have been identified as a Pygmy sperm whale mother/calf pair (*Kogia breviceps*). Following a veterinary examination and in consult with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries stranding coordinator, a veterinary decision was made to humanely euthanize both Pygmy sperm whales due to their poor condition. A full necropsy will be conducted at the HBOI marine mammal pathology laboratory to examine their condition and collect valuable life history data.

This species are typically diagnosed with cardiomyopathy (a cardiac disease), and seldom recover from stressful stranding events.

To report any sick, beached or injured marine animal, notify FWCC dispatchers at 888-404-FWCC.

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#### **About Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute:**

*Founded in 1971, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at Florida Atlantic University is a research community of marine scientists, engineers, educators and other professionals focused on Ocean Science for a Better World. The institute drives innovation in ocean engineering, at-sea operations, drug discovery and biotechnology from the oceans, coastal ecology and conservation, marine mammal research and conservation, aquaculture, ocean observing systems and marine education. For more information, visit [www.hboi.fau.edu](http://www.hboi.fau.edu).*

#### **About Florida Atlantic University:**

*Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of \$6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. FAU's world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the*

*Advancement of Teaching. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of three signature themes – marine and coastal issues, biotechnology and contemporary societal challenges – which provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU's existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit [www.fau.edu](http://www.fau.edu).*