

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Sea Lions Are Latest Attraction At Coral World

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ST. THOMAS -- Coral World Ocean Park on Wednesday announced the arrival of two new sea lions. Freddie, a 620lb, 6-year-old male, and Rose, a petite 250lb, 14-year-old female, traveled on their own private charter plane with three trainers and a veterinarian to ensure their comfort and safety. The animals arrived from Florida at Cyril E. King airport on March 24, and were adjusting well to their new home, Coral World said.

Both Freddie and Rose were born in human care and have been engaged in educational presentations for thousands of people each year. Coral World General Curator Lee Kellar explained, "Modern zoos and aquariums frequently move animals among facilities to ensure balanced social structures and to manage the animals as a larger population."

The sea lions will undergo veterinary and behavioral observation for at least one month in keeping with Coral World policy before being introduced to the current group of sea lions at Coral World.

"Coral World's goal for the sea lions and for all the animals and activities at the park is to educate guests about the marine ecosystem. We want everyone to understand that there is only one world ocean to which humans are inextricably connected. When our guests interact with animals, they learn to appreciate the importance of the marine ecosystem," Mr. Keller said.

Coral World is accredited by the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums which emphasizes education.

According to Mr. Kellar, Coral World trainers spent several weeks with the new sea lions at their Florida home prior to their arrival on St. Thomas. While Freddie and Rose will enter Coral World programs in the future, they need additional time to learn the complex interactions that are part of these programs compared to their previous activities.

"Freddie and Rose are well-trained, but they aren't currently trained for the type of things that our boys do. Coral World sea lions participate in unique and high-level interactive programs. In addition to the programs in which the public participates, the sea lions voluntarily engage in their own veterinary and medical care. The next few months are going to be very exciting for the staff and all of the sea lions," said Assistant Curator Scott Hjerling.

The public is encouraged to visit Coral World's website [here](#) to get the latest updates on when Freddie and Rose will begin educational programs at the park.