

Certificate of Adoption



Manatee GbR Kirschbaum & Diedrich are Official Adoptive Parents of

ARIEL

an imperiled West Indian Manatee

Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park



Photo © Save the Manatee Club.

Jimmy Buffett
Co-Founder
Save the Manatee® Club



Official Biography: Ariel

First Identified: 1973 Mother: Amanda Sex: Female

When Ariel was just a few weeks old, she was rescued with her mother Amanda on a brisk Christmas Day in Lake Worth Inlet, along Florida's southeastern coast. Amanda had been hit by a motorboat and sustained horrible injuries caused by the propeller. Luckily, Ariel was uninjured, but she would not have survived on her own. Manatees are considered semi-social, but the bond between a mother and calf is strong. A calf may stay with its mother for up to two years, nursing and learning all the things necessary to survive, like where to find food and warm water. For this reason, Ariel was rescued with her mother and taken to Miami Seaquarium. In 1986, both Ariel and Amanda were brought to their new home at the Ellie Schiller Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park, one of just a few locations in the United States that is allowed to house and care for imperiled manatees.

Ariel is large for a female manatee, tipping the scales at nearly 2,300 pounds. Average manatees in the wild are about 1,200 pounds, and females are typically larger than males. However, Ariel is a bit TOO large, and her caretakers have been trying various methods to help her shed some pounds.

Ariel is a curious and playful manatee. Once, when a park visitor's shoe fell into the water from the deck of the observatory, she was the first manatee on the scene to investigate it and then proceeded to play with the shoe and

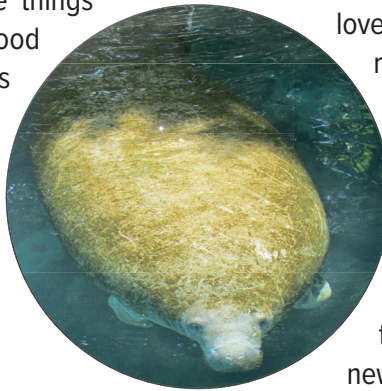
push it around in the water. She is also fond of popping her head up above the water to observe park staff when they are talking during the manatee education programs.

On December 3, 2010, Ariel and the other resident manatees at the park began sharing their spring habitat with free-ranging manatees when they were transferred to a smaller area of the spring for the winter. Their new accommodations include a supplemental heater, which they

love! After the transfer, the gates that have separated the park's manatees from the wild herd for almost 30 years were opened, and they remain open throughout the winter. In the spring, the gate is lowered, and Ariel and the other permanent resident manatees get the entire spring back. This momentous event was made possible in part by Save the Manatee Club (SMC), who purchased the new gate. SMC works diligently with its partners

to ensure protection of and manatee access to warm-water springs, since protecting manatee habitat is one of the most effective ways to protect manatees.

Homosassa Springs is open year-round, so stop in and visit Ariel and the other manatees. If you visit the park and see two or three manatees together, Ariel is probably one of them. Some of the manatees seem to like resting alone, but Ariel can always be found with another manatee. Depending on the time of year, you may also spot some of Ariel's wild friends!



Save the Manatee® Club · savethemanatee.org · 1-800-432-JOIN (5646)

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