Contact: Lee Kellar, General Curator
Phone: (340) 775 1555
Email: Lkellar@coralworldvi.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Coral World Ocean Park Staff Deeply Saddened by Dolphin's Death

Coral World Ocean Park staff members are devastated by the sudden death Thursday of the dolphin calf born to Ping three weeks ago. The results of the complete necropsy performed today by the veterinary staff revealed no specific cause of death at this time.

“Our staff builds deep relationships with the animals and the loss of this calf has hit everyone very hard, especially those who have nurtured and cared for mother and calf for the past three weeks,” said General Curator Lee Kellar. “We truly appreciate the community's support during this difficult time."

According to Kristine Tartaglio, Assistant Curator of Marine Mammals, Ping and the male calf were being monitored by staff 24/7 since Ping went into labor. “The calf was nursing well according to the data we were collecting and was visibly filling out. His death was a shock to us all. He simply did not resurface while swimming. Ping is doing well, and we will continue to observe her closely,” she said.

The Park's consulting veterinarian, Dr. Natalie Noll, DVM, who has years of experience with marine mammals, particularly dolphins, said: “Unfortunately calf mortality is not uncommon in the first few weeks. A complete necropsy has been performed and tissue samples will be sent out for analysis and histopathology to help determine a possible cause of death.” Results are expected to take several weeks.

General Manager Trudie Prior praised the Coral World team that is supporting each other during this sad time. “We are proud of the dedication and expert care that our team gave the calf. While the calf’s life was sadly short, we hope there may be some information from this loss that can benefit dolphins in the marine mammal community and in the wild,” she said.

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About Coral World Ocean Park

Coral World Ocean Park is a marine park in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands and is accredited by the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (AMMPA). Dedicated to providing the highest quality of care for marine mammals and contributing to conservation efforts through scientific research, Coral World offers programming to educate visitors about conservation and how they can make a positive impact on maintaining the integrity of the marine ecosystem. Through interactive experiences that allows visitors to get up close and personal with marine life surrounding the Virgin Islands, Coral World strives to inspire the next generation of animal advocates and conservationists. For more information, visit the Coral World website at https://coralworldvi.com/.