



# MEDIA ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

4PM THURSDAY 24<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009

(RARE FOOTAGE OF SHARK BIRTH AVAILABLE)

## WORLD'S SCIENTISTS CELEBRATE CRITICALLY ENDANGERED SHARK BIRTH IN MOOLOOLABA

Marine scientists around the globe are celebrating the announcement by UnderWater World, Mooloolaba, of their third successful captive birth of a critically endangered Grey Nurse shark.

The birth is an especially important event given that this species is listed as critically endangered along the East Coast of Australia with population estimates as low as 500 animals left in the wild.

This is the fifth successful Grey Nurse Shark birth in captivity and UnderWater World leads the way with their third pregnancy, the last of which occurred over 12 years ago.

Scientists from the USA and South Africa have never been able to achieve this and are asking many questions relating to the captive environment, water temperature and breeding program at UnderWater World.

The birth was unexpected and happened in the middle of one of the aquarium's daily tours and visitors were able to witness and gain incredible footage of this very rare event.

The footage shows a small tail clearly visible from the mother's cloaca and a brave and frantic dash by Underwater World diver Ryan Keck to assist in the delivery and protect the pup from other adult sharks circling and eager for fresh prey.

UnderWater World has made this footage available to the public via its web site [underwaterworld.com.au](http://underwaterworld.com.au).

Rob Mort, Head Curator at UnderWater World says he hopes the new addition of the Grey Nurse pup will help raise awareness about the importance of protecting this species.

"The Grey Nurse Shark is such an incredible animal, it has two uteruses and the unborn foetuses are known to cannibalise their siblings in the womb before birth," he says.

UnderWater World has moved the pup to the coral side of UnderWater World's large oceanarium where there are no large predators and where the queuing public can view the latest addition to UnderWater World's family.

Mother 'Mystery' has been at UnderWater World for 11 years and has recovered extremely well from the birth, already starting the new mating season with the two male Grey Nurse Sharks at UnderWater World.

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For [more information, access to footage or permission to film](#) please contact:

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