

31 sloths allegedly died ahead of Orlando Sloth World attraction's grand opening: FWC report

"Every visit to Sloth World plays a big role in supporting responsible sloth care," the upcoming attraction's website reads.

By **Joey Nolfi** | April 23, 2026 5:14 p.m. ET

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31 sloths die in the care of Orlando Sloth World attraction. Credit: Sloth World; Getty

KEY POINTS

- Thirty-one sloths allegedly died in the care of Orlando Sloth World before the Florida attraction's grand opening.
- Local news found that the animals allegedly died in a warehouse near the busy International Drive.
- A Sloth World owner called the report "entirely false," adding, "We remain deeply committed to the continued care, safety, and health of our sloth population."

Thirty-one sloths have allegedly died in the care of Orlando's Sloth World animal attraction, which is set to open later this year along the vacation destination city's popular International Drive.

Local news outlet [Fox35](#) aired a report earlier this week citing a Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission report that alleged 21 sloths died from a phenomenon called "cold stun." The sloths were allegedly exposed to 46-degree temperatures while being stored inside a warehouse off International Drive, minutes away from the main Sloth World attraction that was initially slated to open in March near other highly attended destinations such as [Disney World](#), [Universal Orlando](#), [SeaWorld](#), and more.

Fox35 noted that the other 10 sloths died from unspecified reasons, with the animals arriving in two separate shipments in December 2024; one from Guyana, and another from Peru.



Sloth hanging from a tree.
Credit: Getty

The FWC inquired about the deaths in August 2025, during a routine inspection of the property, the news outlet said of the report, which also noted that an employee told investigators the "building was not ready for the incoming sloths, but it was too late to cancel the incoming shipment."

The outlet also said that a problem developed with the cord supplying power to space heaters inside the warehouse, allegedly causing the warehouse to grow cold in temperatures that dropped overnight.

A sloth expert interviewed by Fox35 told the station that exposure to low temperatures can lead to the death of bacteria in a sloth's stomach, which then results in death as the animals can't properly digest food.



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In a statement to Fox35, one of the owners of the Sloth World facility blamed the deaths on a "foreign virus" they've "worked tirelessly" alongside a veterinarian, the Florida Department of Agriculture, and other "outside experts" to identify and address.

"We are aware of rumors such as claiming that our sloths were 'cold-stunned' or left without water or electricity. These claims are entirely false," the statement continued. "The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) conducted a thorough inspection of our facility just last week, found absolutely no wrongdoings, and fully renewed our license. We have always prioritized the health and well-being of our animals, investing millions into their care and habitats. We remain deeply committed to the continued care, safety, and health of our sloth population."

Entertainment Weekly has reached out to Sloth World and the FWC for comment.



A sloth on a tree branch.
Credit: Getty

According to Sloth World's website, "Every visit to Sloth World plays a big role in supporting responsible sloth care, conservation education, and ongoing research," with tickets to visit its "Slotharium" listed at \$49.

"Sloth World provides sloths from distressed habitats with a calm, cageless environment supported by trained animal science specialists," the website adds. "Through active partnerships with university researchers, we contribute biological data, maintain a growing health database, and support research grants that advance sloth science. Ticket revenue directly funds care, education, and ongoing research efforts that benefit sloths globally."

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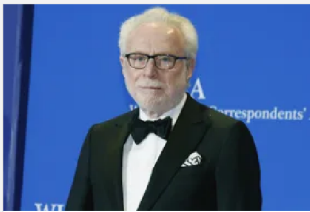
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