

Stranded Sea Turtles

Sea turtles can be injured or killed by fishing nets and lines, boat propellers and natural predators. If you see a sick or dead sea turtle on the beach or in the marsh, please call the North Myrtle Beach Sea Turtle Patrol at 843-283-6670.

Do not move the turtle unless it is in danger of being washed out to sea by the tide.

All sea turtle hatchlings, adults and eggs, are protected by the federal and state laws. It is illegal to take any part of a sea turtle carcass such as a shell, rib, bones, or skull from the beach.



S.C.U.T.E

The South Carolina United Sea Turtle Enthusiasts are a group of volunteers dedicated to the preservation of sea turtles in Georgetown and Horry counties. Organized in 1990, S.C.U.T.E was granted permission by the S.C. Department of Natural Resources to protect, and if necessary, relocate turtle nests.

S.C.U.T.E also coordinates volunteer efforts to preserve quality nesting habitats and to monitor nests.

What You Can Do To Help...

- Report any sea turtle activity to the North Myrtle Beach Sea Turtle Patrol by calling 843-283-6670 any time of the day or night. Activity includes nesting females, sea turtle tracks, stranded turtles, or hatchlings.
- Turn off beachfront lights after 10 p.m. from May 1 through October 31. Use blinds or curtains to block indoor lights from reaching the beach.
- Remove obstacles from the beach after 7 p.m. This includes tents, chairs, coolers, and sports equipment, all of which can entrap nesting females and emerging hatchlings.
- Fill in your sand holes before you leave the beach. Holes can trap or slow down a nesting female or emerging hatchlings.
- Do not litter. Dispose of all trash properly. Sea turtles mistakenly eat plastics, especially plastic bottles, bags, and balloons. They may also become entangled in ropes, strings, and fishing lines.
- If you hook a turtle while fishing, do not cut the line or pull out the hook. Get help from the proper authorities or call the NMB Sea Turtle Patrol.



Sea Turtles are Engangered and Face Extinction!

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www.SplashStudioPhotography.com*



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North Myrtle Beach Sea Turtle Patrol

About The Patrol

The North Myrtle Beach Sea Turtle Patrol was organized in 2010 and is an all volunteer group working for the preservation of endangered sea turtles. The leaders of the group are authorized by the SC Department of Natural Resources to conduct research and management activities regarding sea turtle conservation. For stranding activities, the leaders are authorized to measure and mark dead sea turtles, transport or transfer sea turtle specimens in SC. For nesting activities, the leaders are authorized to identify and mark nests, inventory nests three full nights or four days after emergence, recover hatchlings, probe to locate egg clutches, relocate nests, cage nests and collect one egg shell from each nest for genetic research study.



From May 1st thru mid August, starting at sunrise, the volunteers walk every mile of North Myrtle Beach looking for turtle tracks in the sand which would indicate a strong possibility that a sea turtle laid a nest of eggs.

45-65 days after a nest is laid the hatchlings will emerge from the nest. North Myrtle Beach Sea Turtle Patrol volunteers inventory the nests four days after the hatchlings have emerged to determine the number of eggs, how many hatched, and how many did not. The public is invited to attend the inventories.

Loggerhead Sea Turtles

Loggerhead sea turtles nest on the beaches from North Carolina to Florida. Adult Loggerheads may weigh 200-350 lbs and can grow up to five feet in length. A female may crawl on shore several times during the nesting season to lay a clutch of eggs after she digs a hole with her hind flippers. Each nest contains 80-150 eggs. After laying the eggs, the turtle covers the nest and packs down the sand to hide the nest. She then goes back to the ocean, never to return to the eggs or nest.



Adult Loggerhead Sea Turtle

Six-eight weeks later the hatchlings dig their way out of the sand, usually emerging after dark, and go toward the natural light of the moon. On developed beaches, the hatchlings may confuse artificial light from buildings or piers with natural light of the moon, and go in the wrong direction. This could cause them to end up in the dunes or on the streets, which leaves them more exposed to predators and dehydration, lessening their survival chance.



Sea Turtle Crawl

If You See a Nesting Female...

- Do not crowd the turtle as she is coming out of the ocean and crawling up the beach.
- Squat down and stay still. Movement may make her return to the ocean.
- Dark beaches and little activity after dark will encourage a turtle to come ashore to nest.
- Do not shine flash lights or take flash photography while watching a nesting turtle.
- Call the NMB Sea Turtle Patrol at 843-283-6670.



If You See Hatchlings Emerging From a Nest...

- Observe quietly, do not pick up the hatchlings and put into the ocean. They must crawl across the sand by themselves.
- Do not shine lights on hatchlings or take flash photos. Lights can disorient the turtles.
- Call the NMB Sea Turtle Patrol at 843-283-6670.
- If a hatchling is on the beach during the day, they can dehydrate quickly from the heat of the sun and die. If one is found, place it just at the edge of the surf to allow it to rehydrate. Do not put into the water. When it is ready, it will make its own way into the surf.