



If you find a sick or injured sea turtle, please do not place it back in the water. It may need medical assistance.

*Call the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Wildlife Alert Hotline at 1-888-404-FWCC (888-404-3922) or, from your cell phone, dial #FWC or *FWC.*

FROM TURTLE FEST TO TURTLE NESTS...



A huge thank you to everyone who joined us for the 17th Annual Turtle Fest in Flagler Beach! It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces—and plenty of new ones too—coming together to celebrate our favorite flippered friends. Your support and enthusiasm mean the world to us and help keep our mission alive and thriving year after year.

As we turn the corner into spring, it's time to gear up for the heart of our work: sea turtle nesting season. Patrols will begin soon, and there's still time to get involved! If you haven't already, be sure to submit your volunteer application and consider adopting a nest to support this year's efforts. Every form, every volunteer, and every bit of support makes a real difference for our local sea turtles.

Whether it's your first season or your fifteenth, this time of year always brings a sense of purpose and excitement. Watching the first mother turtle come ashore or seeing hatchlings make their way to the sea never gets old—and knowing that we play a part in their journey is what makes it all worthwhile. Let's work together to protect every nest, every hatchling, and every stretch of shoreline.

Here's to a safe, successful, and shell-tacular nesting season ahead!

Nic Poorte

Nic Poorte, Chief Operating Officer



2024 Flagler county nest totals
(by species.)

562

Loggerhead

68

Green

6

Leatherback



LOGGERHEAD

Most common nester in Florida!

- Named for their large, powerful heads
- Reddish-brown shell and strong jaws
- Nest mostly at night from May through August
- Hatchlings follow moonlight to the sea—so keep lights off!



GREEN

Second most common nester in our area

- Smooth, brown or olive-colored shell
- Named for the greenish fat inside their bodies (not their shell!)
- Herbivores—love seagrass and algae
- Nesting season typically peaks in late summer



LEATHERBACK

Largest of all sea turtles—and the rarest nester on our beaches

- Can grow over 6 feet long and weigh more than 1,000 lbs
- Unique leathery shell instead of a hard one
- Often nest early in the season (starting in March!)
- Feed mostly on jellyfish—making them essential for ocean balance



KEMP'S RIDLEY

The smallest and rarest sea turtle in the world

- More commonly seen offshore, but occasionally nest in Florida
- Olive-gray shell with a nearly circular shape
- Often seen during daylight hours
- Critically endangered—every sighting matters!



TURTLE SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH:

Smooth Sand Saves Lives

As temperatures rise and families begin to spend more time on our beautiful beaches, it's important to remember that we share this special space with nesting sea turtles and their soon-to-be hatchlings. While digging holes and building sandcastles are classic beach activities, they can unintentionally create serious hazards for our flippered friends.

Large holes, trenches, and sand structures can trap or injure nesting turtles as they make their way ashore. Even more concerning, hatchlings—which are only a few inches long—can easily become disoriented or stuck on their critical journey from nest to ocean.

That's why we ask all beachgoers to fill in any holes and flatten sandcastles before leaving the beach. Taking just a few extra minutes at the end of your visit can help ensure a safer path for sea turtles and contribute to a healthier coastline for everyone.

How Can You Help?

- Bring a small shovel or bucket to refill holes before you leave
- Knock down sandcastles and level any large mounds.
- Remind friends and family to leave the beach flat and clean
- Watch out for signs of nesting activity and avoid disturbing marked areas

Let's all do our part to keep the beach turtle-friendly—one scoop of sand at a time!