

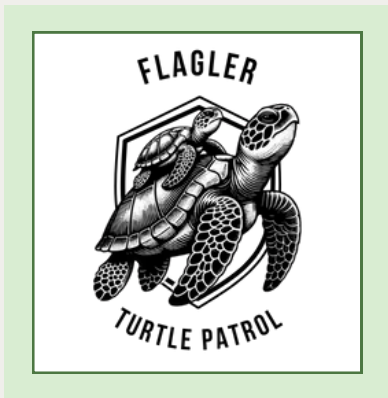


If you find a sick or injured sea turtle, please do not place it back in the water. It may need medical assistance.

*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 .*

WELCOME TO AUGUST, TURTLE ENTHUSIASTS!

We are thrilled to share with you this inaugural edition of our Flagler Turtle Patrol Newsletter. As a dedicated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, we are passionately committed to protecting and conserving Florida's precious nesting turtles. Our team of volunteers works tirelessly to support these magnificent creatures and their nesting habitats, ensuring their survival for future generations.



In this newsletter, we aim to keep you informed about our latest conservation efforts, upcoming events, and ways that you can get involved in our mission.

Thank you for your support as we embark on this journey to make a difference for Florida's nesting sea turtles!

Nic Poorte

Nic Poorte, Chief Operating Officer



YTD Flagler county nest totals as of July 31 (by species.)

689

Loggerhead

42

Green

7

Leatherback



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT!

Name: Teresa



How long have you been volunteering with Flagler Turtle Patrol?

I volunteered from 2003 - 2012. Then I spent 8.5 years in the Keys at the turtle hospital. Then I came back in 2021. And I have been volunteering since then. So - Turtles in general for 22 years, Flagler Turtle Patrol for almost 13 years total.

How did you get started with Flagler Turtle Patrol?

My sister saw the meeting info in the newspaper and thought it looked fun. We grew up seeing the nests on the beach, but didn't know a whole lot about it. I was going to college to study Marine Biology and thought it fit. Started volunteering and that was it!

What do you enjoy most about volunteering with Flagler Turtle Patrol?

The best part is being able to see the turtles and hatchlings. It's fun trying to figure out what the momma turtle did based on her tracks, although sometimes it's difficult. Having to get up early is not fun, but it is cool seeing the sun rise. And getting to teach people about the turtles. Most people care, but they just don't know anything about them. And them being able to see the tracks or the babies makes it real for them and then they are more likely to help our conservation efforts.



TURTLE SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH:

Preventing Sea Turtle Disorientations on the Beach

As we continue our efforts to protect sea turtles, it's crucial to address the issue of disorientations on our beaches, which can have devastating effects on both hatchlings and nesting mothers. Sea turtles, particularly hatchlings, rely on natural light cues from the moon and stars to guide them toward the ocean. However, artificial lighting from beachfront properties, vehicles, and even flashlights can confuse them, leading to dangerous outcomes.

Why are Disorientations Dangerous?

When hatchlings are disoriented, they often head away from the ocean and toward land, where they face numerous threats, such as dehydration, predation, and exhaustion. Nesting mothers can also become disoriented by artificial lights, which may prevent them from finding suitable nesting sites or cause them to abandon nesting attempts altogether.

How Can You Help?

- **Turn Off or Shield Lights:** If you live near the beach, make sure outdoor lights are turned off or shielded to prevent them from shining directly onto the sand. Consider installing turtle-friendly lighting, which is low and directed downward.
- **Close Curtains at Night:** Indoor lighting can also be a problem. Close your curtains or blinds at night to keep indoor lights from spilling onto the beach.
- **Be Mindful with Flashlights:** When walking on the beach at night, use a red or amber-colored flashlight, which is less likely to disorient turtles. Keep the light low and avoid shining it directly on the sand.
- **Respect Beach Regulations:** Follow local beach regulations, especially during nesting season. This often includes restrictions on nighttime activities and driving on the beach.
- **Educate Others:** Spread the word about the importance of reducing light pollution for sea turtles. The more people are aware, the more effective our collective efforts will be.

By taking these simple steps, we can help ensure that sea turtles have a safe passage to the ocean and a better chance at survival. Let's make our beaches a sanctuary for these magnificent creatures, free from the dangers of disorientation.

For more information, please visit <https://myfwc.com/wildlife/sea-turtle/lighting/>