

# The Turtle Times

A Seasonal Publication from the Edisto Beach Loggerhead Sea Turtle Project

Summer 2025

[edistobeachseaturtles.com](http://edistobeachseaturtles.com)

## Sea Turtles Return to Edisto Beach

The first turtle nest of the summer was laid on Edisto Beach on May 7th. Nesting season will continue until October 1st. Last summer 148 nests were laid on Edisto Beach. From those nests 11,429 hatchlings were born on Edisto Beach. On average only one out of a thousand will survive to adulthood. Last summer's largest nest had 150 eggs and the smallest nest had 69 eggs. Sea turtles very rarely leave the water. Females leave the ocean only to lay eggs. An adult loggerhead sea turtle weighs an average of 250 pounds. The average hatchling weighs about 1 ounce. It takes 20 to 30 years for a female turtle to be mature enough to lay a nest. She may nest every 2 to 3 years and lay between 1 and 5 nests in the same season. It takes her between 1 to 3 hours to lay a nest. After a female turtle drags herself up the beach, she hollows out a pit with her back flippers and deposits an average of 100 eggs the size of ping pong balls. When the last egg is laid, she covers the eggs with sand and flings more sand about with her flippers to erase any signs of the nest. After about 2 months, the hatchling turtles emerge at night. They follow the light reflected off the water from the sky to guide them to the sea. This is why it is very important to keep all lights from being seen by the turtles. Lights from houses, cars, and flashlights could cause a turtle to not find it's way to the ocean. This is called a misorientation and hatchlings may be lost when this occurs. Nests are often lost to predators such as raccoons, dogs, ghost crabs, sea birds and ants. Keeping the beach clean of litter and food waste helps to keep these predators away from nests. Even though the adult turtle can be as big as 4 feet long, traveling on land is challenging. The beach should be kept as flat and clean as possible so that the nesting moms can save their energy and strength for laying their nests. And at less than two inches long, a hatchling will need a clear path to get to its new home in the ocean.



Ron Scroggy

Loggerhead Sea Turtle returns to the ocean after laying her nest on Edisto Beach

## New for 2025 The Junior Turtle Patrol

To the support the mission and volunteers of the Edisto Beach Loggerhead Sea Turtle Project, the Junior Turtle Patrol has been launched. Visitors and residents are encouraged to join us in our efforts to make Edisto Beach the best destination it can be to continue to host the beloved Loggerhead Sea Turtle for future generations. The Edisto Beach Loggerhead Sea Turtle Project invites guests and residents to become members of Junior Turtle Patrol. Simply commit to follow the guidelines of our pledge. If you would like a "thank you" sticker from us, complete your signed pledge and visit a designated location. Go to [edistobeachseaturtles.com](http://edistobeachseaturtles.com) to choose a location to receive your gift.

### JUNIOR TURTLE PATROL PLEDGE

#### BE FLAT

Knock Down Castles Before Dark  
Fill In All Holes

#### BE CLEAN

Pick Up All Trash  
Put Away All Beach Gear

#### BE UNSEEN

Turn Off Lights On The Beach  
Use a Red Filter on Flashlights and Phones  
Maintain a Respectful Distance from Turtles or hatchlings

#### ENCOURAGE OTHERS

Make Sure Your Friends and Family Know and Follow All Beach Guidelines

I, \_\_\_\_\_ pledge to follow the Junior Turtle Patrol Pledge while visiting Edisto Beach from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ 2025.



Scan the QR code to visit our website.

# Litter Trashes Everything

Always pick up litter even if it is not yours! Plastics, especially balloons are very dangerous for turtles and other sea creatures. Balloons and zip lock baggies look kind of like jelly fish to the fish and turtles and if they eat them, the animals may die. There are trash containers at every beach access and most have recycle containers for aluminum cans. Glass is not allowed on the beach. Remember that food waste and fish bait attract animals to the beach that are predators who will destroy the turtle nests. Also, sometimes small plastic toys get lost in the sand and end up in the ocean. Please be sure you leave the beach clean of all litter and waste.



Ron Scroggy

How could these items be harmful to a turtle?

## All Clear for the Journey

Is there any greater beach fun than digging, playing, and building sandcastles? At the the end of the day, please refill the holes and tear down the castles before nightfall. Moving on land is very challenging to a sea turtle. Mama and baby turtles can fall in holes and make it even more difficult to return to the ocean. Baby turtles may not be able to navigate around castles and they may get lost and never make it to the ocean. Holes and structures are also dangerous for people walking on the beach at night. Please make sure your family and friends take all the beach chairs, bags, and tents off the beach every night so they will not be an obstacle to the turtles. Keep our beach flat and clean.



Ron Scroggy

Filling in the holes at Edisto Beach

## If You See Something, Say Something

Immediately report anyone disturbing a nest, sea turtle, or hatchling to the Edisto Beach Police at 843-549-2211.

Provide photo or video evidence to police when they arrive.

Call Edisto Beach Police if you see turtles in distress or in need of help.

If a sea turtle is caught on a fishing line call South Carolina Department of Natural Resources at 1-800-922-5431.



Becky Lynch

Obstacles that seem small to us are impassible to turtles.



Becky Lynch

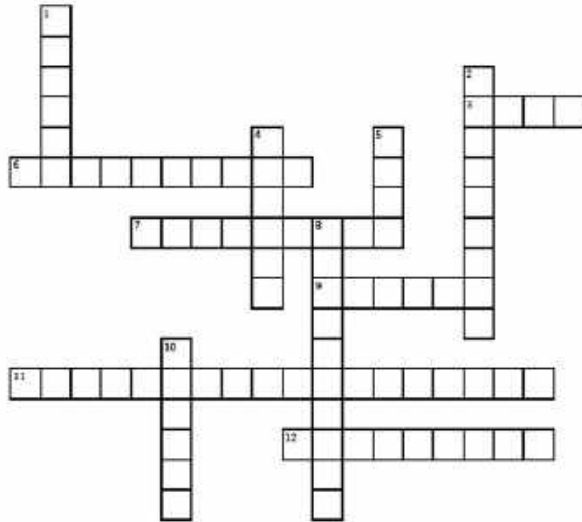
Injured or sick sea turtles can be taken to The South Carolina Aquarium Sea Turtle Care Center where they can get better and be returned to the ocean.

# The Puzzle Page

## SEA TURTLE WORD SEARCH

Find the words in the puzzle. Words can go in any direction. Words can share letters as they cross over each other.

## EDISTO SEA TURTLE CROSSWORD








**Down:**

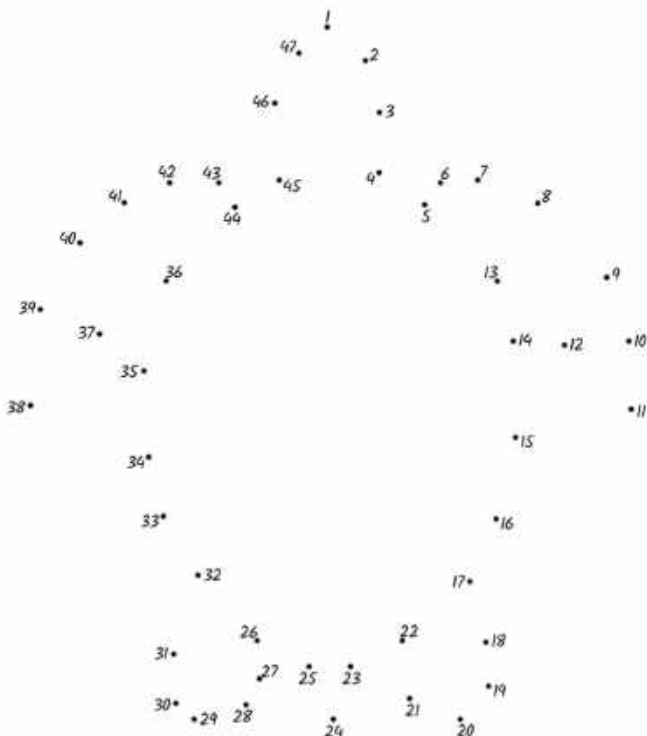
1. What should you do with holes at the end of the day?
2. Sea turtles often confuse plastic bags for this snack with a sting.
4. Who you should call if you see someone disturbing a nest, hatchling, or turtle.
5. Sea turtles don't have feet. Instead, they use \_\_\_\_\_ to swim.
8. This is the baby turtles are called when they are born.
10. Turtles can't breathe underwater, so they hold their \_\_\_\_\_ while swimming.

**Across:**

3. Sea Turtles bury these in the sand along the beach.
6. The time between when the turtle lays the eggs and the hatchlings emerge.
7. Lights that are NOT easily seen by a sea turtle.
9. What the Turtle Patrol is looking for in the early morning.
11. Edisto Beach program to get kids involved in protecting our sea turtles.
12. What should you do with sand structures like castles or art?

-  On average, only 1 out of 1000 hatchlings survive to adulthood
-  An average nest contains 120 turtle eggs
-  Hatchlings emerge 45 to 60 days later
-  Turtles must mature for at least 20 years before they reproduce
-  Many turtles return to nest on the very same beach where they hatched!

## Connect the Dots



- BE CLEAN
- BE FLAT
- BE UNSEEN
- BEAK
- CLEAN UP
- CLUTCH
- COASTAL
- CONSERVATION
- DIG
- DNA
- DOLPHINS
- EDISTO BEACH
- EGGS
- ENDANGERED
- FLIPPERS
- GHOST CRAB
- GREEN SEA TURTLE
- HATCHLING

- JUNIOR TURTLE PATROL
- KEMPS RIDLEY
- LEATHERBACK
- LIGHTS OUT
- LOGGERHEAD
- MARINE
- MAY
- MIGRATION
- NEST
- OCEAN
- OCTOBER
- PREDATOR
- RED LIGHT FILTER
- RESPECTFUL
- SHELL
- STATE PARK
- SUMMER
- TAIL

## The Life Cycle of a Sea Turtle



**Female sea turtle lays eggs**—crawls out of water to find a place to nest, digs a hole about 2 feet down with her rear flippers in the shape of an inverted light bulb, lays an average of 100-120 eggs, covers hole, throws sand, crawls back to ocean



**Return to coastal waters**—now the juvenile turtles will continue to grow and after at least 20 years they will mate. Female turtles will return to same beach to start the life cycle all over again.

### How to Be Unseen By a Sea Turtle at Night

- \* Turn off all outside lights.
- \* When out on the beach use a red sticker filter on phones or flashlights.
- \* Use an app on your phone such as “NightVision” by Vixen to make your screen a red light.

**EBLTP (Edisto Beach Loggerhead Turtle Project)** is the official sea turtle preservation team for endangered sea turtles in the Town of Edisto Beach. Established in 1982, the organization is a registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit in South Carolina and obtains annual authorization from the SC DNR to perform conservation activities. Its volunteers train extensively to professionally assist nesting turtles, stranded turtles, and hatchlings. All beach rules described in this newspaper are sections of ordinances of the Town of Edisto Beach and regulations of South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.



**Incubation**—the eggs will incubate 45 to 90 days in the sand



**Hatchings**—usually all the hatchlings will come out together at night (called a boil) and crawl to the water towards the light

All photos were taken on Edisto Beach by Ron Scroggy



For the most recent information about the 2025 nesting season follow us on Facebook .

[www.facebook.com/edistotownbeachturtles](https://www.facebook.com/edistotownbeachturtles)

