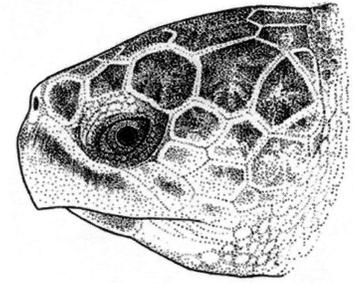


How you can help protect Sea Turtles



Waters off the coast of North Carolina are home to five of the six sea turtles found in the U.S. All of these turtles are listed as threatened or endangered and there are penalties for killing, harassing or harming these turtles.

You may be one of the lucky beach goers that see a loggerhead turtle nesting or hatchlings emerging. Loggerheads are the most common sea turtle which nests on North Carolina beaches. May through October are when females crawl ashore at night to lay their eggs. After laying around 120 eggs, the turtle returns to the ocean. After a 60-day incubation period, the hatchlings emerge and make their journey to the ocean.

The following are ways we can all help the turtles have a successful nesting season:

- Minimize beachfront lighting - to include closing blinds and draperies in oceanfront rooms.
- Remove all recreational equipment from the beach when not in use, including chairs, umbrellas, towels, etc., and fill in holes dug on the beach at the end of the day.
- Do not construct beach fires during the nesting season. The hatchlings could become disoriented and crawl toward the fire.
- Refrain from using flashlights on the beach at night.
- Do not take flash photography of a nesting sea turtle, nor the hatchlings.
- Leave the tracks left by turtles undisturbed.
- Do not disturb sea turtles or their nests. Most North Carolina beaches have volunteer programs that protect and monitor sea turtle nests. Report unmarked nests, hurt or dead turtles to the local police.
- Pick-up all of your trash from the beach.
- Avoid trampling beach vegetation.
- When boating stay in the channels and avoid seagrass beds and avoid anchoring in these habitats



Fact Sheet Courtesy of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
For further information visit our websites at:
nc-es.fws.gov or www.ncwildlife.org

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