

Dear Sea Turtle Friends and Supporters,

2018 was uneventful for the most part: Nesting was down, the 3rd year beach renourishment project had minimal impact, and there were no major storms. Here's a look at the numbers:

- 44 Total nests (41 loggerheads, 1 green, 2 leatherbacks)
- 2,931 Total hatched eggs (from 38 evaluated nests)
- 34 false crawls (aborted nesting attempts)

Three of the nests were unproductive and the remaining three were not evaluated due to lost nest markers.

Despite municipal light ordinances, and our best efforts to mitigate light interference, we documented 10 disorientation events in Atlantic Beach and Jacksonville Beach. Two incidents involved nesting adults and the rest were hatchling events. Not surprisingly, one of the hatchling events was a nest from one of the disoriented mama turtles. These incidents underscore the need for our communities to come together as residents, city leaders and business operators to help ensure a safe nesting habitat.

A disorientation event occurs when the turtle is influenced to travel in the wrong direction (away from the ocean) by any kind of artificial light source. This includes lights on homes/buildings, in parking lots & landscaping, flashlights and camera flashes.

To learn more about dangers from artificial lights please visit the FWC resource at bit.ly/2nFBHsd

Also in the loss column were three predation events by a ghost crab, domestic dog, and a fox. These resulted in the loss of at least 15 hatchlings and 10 incubating eggs.

But we also had a good surprise! The "special nest of the season" award for 2018 goes to our (very) late season nest on September 14. It was a green turtle nest that successfully produced 78 hatchlings! We called it our Thanksgiving nest because we monitored it all the way through November 23, and we were very thankful it was 100% productive.

In December, BSTP was chosen to receive the 2018 Beaches Watch Give Back Award in recognition of our conservation efforts. We are very honored to have been awarded this donation among the many other qualified organizations. Thank you, Beaches Watch members, so much!

Statewide Report

Overall, 2018 was a decent year statewide. FWC reports 91,451 loggerhead nests (down from 2017). Green nests had an expected low year at 4,545 nests (down from last year's

record high). Leatherbacks accounted for 949 nests which were up from 2017.

For additional 2018 statewide nesting information visit FWC's research section at bit.ly/2nAjOyi

2019 Calendar of Events

- Feb. 12**, 6-7. Exhibit table, Jax Bch Elementary Science Night
Feb. 16, 10-2. Exhibit table, Jacksonville Zoo Manatee Festival
Feb. 24, 5:30-8. Discussion panel following film "Blue", sponsored by Beaches Go Green.
Mar. 2, 11-6. Exhibit table/speaker presentation, Northeast FL VegFest.
Mar. 16, 8-11. St. Johns River Keeper Beach cleanup, Atlantic Blvd.
Mar. 27, 10-1. Ponte Vedra High School "Spring Into Health & Wellness" Fair
Apr. 20, 10-5. Exhibit table, Artist Meet & Greet and (BSTP) Fundraiser, Atlantic Beach Arts Market
Apr. 20, 10-5, Exhibit table, Beaches Earth Day, Jarboe Park
First week in May Virtual annual pre-season meeting at bstp.net. Recorded, attend at your leisure.
May 1 Official start of nesting season.
May 18, 11-4. Exhibit table at Dancin' in the Street.
July 5, 7-9 am. Annual 5th of July beach cleanup. Beach & Atlantic Blvds.
Sept. 21, 7-9 am. Annual International Coastal Clean Up Day.
Oct. 31 Official end of nesting season. Beach & Atlantic Blvds.

Check bstp.net and Facebook page for new events. Event/Exhibit dates are subject to change or cancellation.

Beach Access Signage Project

This time last year we were awaiting delivery and installation of our signs. We are happy to report that the project was completed at the beginning of the nesting season and the signs are present at virtually all of the beach accesses in Atlantic, Neptune & Jax Beach.

Community response has been very positive and we are hopeful the signs will continue to educate the public about how to help us protect these wonderful creatures.

This project was made possible by Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens, The American Association of Zookeepers, CustomSigns.com, and BSTP donors like you. Our thanks to the cities of Atlantic, Neptune and Jacksonville Beaches for their support and the manpower to install them.



On The Horizon

BSTP is continuing to develop new partnerships. In 2018 we joined forces with local artist Marie Lyon Carney who held several popular art events to benefit the patrol. We look forward to working with her again, and encourage you to check out her unique artwork at artjax.com.

We're also excited to announce a new partnership with Atlantic Beach Arts Market. They will hold a fundraiser for BSTP that will kick off with an artist meet and greet and BSTP exhibit on April 20. atlanticbeachartsmarket.com.

And proving that you really can be in two places at one time, we will have a second exhibit table at Beaches Earth Day Festival at Jarboe Park, also on April 20. beacheseearthdayfestival.com.

We wish to thank Beaches Go Green for inviting us to join their discussion panel after their sponsored showing of the ocean documentary "Blue". We look forward to future endeavors with this awesome organization. beachesgogreen.org.

Currently we are in the development stage of an educational program for guests of a prominent beachfront hotel. We will announce details when the program is confirmed.

We've expanded our social media presence so you can now find us on Instagram and Linked In! (see Reference Links section). We continue to explore ways to make it fast and easy for mobile users to donate. We now have "text to donate" capability. Simply text **bstp** to 707070 and you'll be directed to a mobile donation site.

In closing, we thank all of you for your continued support, as well. Without your donations we would be unable to provide the protections that are so vital to keeping these wondrous creatures alive for future generations. All donations are tax deductible (receipt provided upon request), and many employers have implemented matching donation programs. Please also consider purchasing a state-issued sea turtle license tag. It is the second-most popular Florida tag and the proceeds are used to fund research projects, provide educational materials and promote sea turtle conservation throughout the state.

Thank you again, and we'll see you on the beach!

BSTP Directors

BSTP, Inc. is a registered 501(c)(3) and 509(a)(2) organization under the U.S. Internal Revenue Service Code. We are a 100% volunteer organization and receive no direct government funding.

All conservation activities are approved by FWC under Marine Turtle Permit #111.

Reference Links

BSTP Online

bstp.net
facebook.com/beachesseaturtlepatrol
youtube.com/user/bstpJax
instagram.com/bstpjax
linkedin.com/in/bstp

External Resources

Donate while you shop on Amazon!
smile.amazon.com/ch/59-3100324
myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/managed/sea-turtles
myfwc.com/research/wildlife/sea-turtles
myfwc.com/conservation/you-observe/lighting
oceanconservancy.org/our-work/marine-debris
<http://conserveturtles.org>

Local Lighting Ordinances

bstp.net/PDFs/JaxBch Ord 2000-7789.pdf
bstp.net/PDFs/NepBch Ord 201999-01.pdf
bstp.net/PDFs/AB Ord 95-17-114.pdf

How your donations are used

- Utility vehicles, maintenance, gasoline
- Nest protection materials
- Office supplies and administrative infrastructure
- Educational materials (activity books, exhibits, brochures)
- Volunteer support (training materials, etc.)

BSTP is the only FWC-permitted turtle patrol in Atlantic, Neptune and Jax Beaches.

Our name is clearly visible on our work shirts and ATVs. If you observe anyone touching a turtle or a nest that is NOT identifiable as a BSTP volunteer, please notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency immediately. Similarly, there are no other groups who are authorized to accept donations or sell items on behalf of BSTP.

*You can help protect the turtles
just by keeping the beach clean
dark and flat!*

Pick up trash, fill in holes,
knock down sandcastles



Nest watching or "nest-sitting" violates FWC protocol as it is highly illegal to interfere in any way with a nest or the turtles themselves. Please report any human disturbances immediately to the local police department and FL Wildlife Alert line at 1-888-404-3922, or #FWC from cell phone.