

Share the Beach Newsletter



Photo Credit:
Judy Coady
Crabby Claw Creations

2nd Annual Sea Turtle "Homecoming" Festival

St. Johns County and Keepers of the Coast are teaming up with the Annual USA Turtle Town Beach Cleanup to host the 2nd Annual Sea Turtle "Homecoming" Festival on Saturday, April 26th at the Ocean Pier Pavilion. Keepers of the Coast is a newly formed non-profit devoted to building a community of active participants dedicated to preserving our beaches for future generations. The 7th Annual USA Turtle Town Beach Cleanup is an event that the St. Johns County Waste Management Department implements. It currently has around 200 volunteers and brings in approximately 2,000 to 3,000 lbs of trash. The purpose of the annual beach clean up day is to prepare the beaches for the homecoming of the returning sea turtle. Each year from May 1 – October 31 (the official sea turtle season) sea turtles return to their natal beaches to nest. While approaching the shore to nest sea turtles encounter debris, trash, beach chairs, and other such items. These items may cause the sea turtle to become trapped or deter her from nesting all together.

Immediately following the beach clean up will be the 2nd Annual Sea Turtle Festival. This year the festival will host an array of education tables from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) Law Enforcement and Imperiled

Species Section, Caribbean Conservation Corporation, Ocean Conservancy, Surfrider Foundation, Audubon Society, local sea turtle patrol organizations, and St. Johns County Habitat Conservation Department. The Purple Olive will be selling their scrumptious assortment of food. Delightful teas from Fusion Tea will be available and volunteers from Keepers of the Coast will be selling natural & organic juices and sodas. Many marine related art/book vendors will be showing off their earthly creations. There will be a Sea Turtle Excluder Device on display as well a children's area where kids can complete a sea turtle scavenger hunt and win a prize. To top it all off live music will be provided by the returning Saltwater Cowgirls, MOLTA, and Aslyn & The Nay Sayers. Volunteers are needed for both events. Please contact Tara Dodson at 904.209.3740 for more information.

Schedule of Events

Turtle Town Beach Cleanup

Cleanup- 8:00 to 11:00

Bags, gloves & registration forms are available that day at Micklers Landing, Vilano Beach ramp, St. Johns County Pier, and the Crescent Beach parking lot

Sea Turtle Festival

10:00 to 3:00 pm

St. Johns County Ocean Pier Pavilion



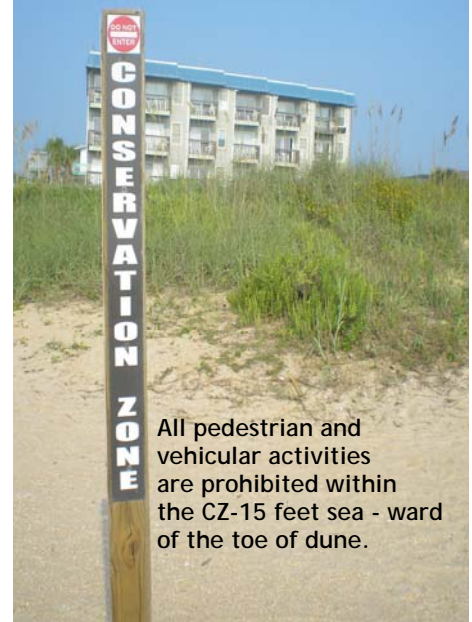
St. Johns County Beach Services is looking for some dedicated volunteers. If you are interested in one of the following programs please contact us:

*Sea Turtle Patrol (if available)
Sea Turtle Festival Committee
Sea Turtle Washback Program
Adopt-A-Beach
Habitat Conservation Office Duties*

*Tara Dodson
Habitat Conservation Coordinator
904.209.3740*

KNOW THE ZONE

The Conservation Zone (CZ)
St. Johns County Beaches



All pedestrian and vehicular activities are prohibited within the CZ-15 feet sea - ward of the toe of dune.



"If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in the water."

*Loren Eiseley
Author and Naturalist*

Adopt-A-Beach

Have you ever been on the beach and noticed more trash and debris than sand, especially after a big storm? Now imagine you're a sea turtle, bird or beach mouse and you live on this very same beach. This sort of problem is recognized world wide by the Ocean Conservancy. They host an annual International Coastal Cleanup day where data is obtained by volunteers to determine the amounts of trash that accumulates on our beaches and where it comes from. Ocean Conservancy reports that the past 10 years of beach cleanup data have proven 60% - 80% of marine debris comes from land-based sources. After large storm events the beaches become inundated with trash such as plastics, tires, trees, stairs, decks, concrete, glass, cigarette butts, and whatever else you can think of. It becomes difficult for the County's trash contractor, Beachcombers, to keep up. Doesn't seem too promising does it? Well no so fast... St. Johns County Recreation and Parks, Beach Services Department recognizes that our beaches need to be cleaned up more than just the

daily clean ups as provided by the County's trash contractor. The County notices the trash too, and they want to do something about it. To reduce the amounts of trash that have negative impacts on coastal species as well as visitors, St. Johns County has teamed with Keepers of the Coast to implement an Adopt-A-Beach program. Keepers of the Coast has a vision of a coastline free of debris that is safe for residents, visitors, and native species to enjoy. The Adopt-A-Beach program will help in this effort by encompassing all of St. Johns County beaches. This program will give local organizations and individuals the opportunity to "adopt" a stretch of St. Johns County coastline. The program features four scheduled beach clean-ups each year, bringing community members and local businesses together to keep our beaches clean. With your help and dedication, we can keep the beaches of St. Johns County one of our greatest treasures. To find out more or to adopt a stretch of beach contact Tara Dodson at 904.209.3740.

Adopt-A-Beach Highlights

- **Right Whale Level - \$5,000 donation, lifetime steward of our beaches**
- **Leatherback Sea Turtle Level - \$500 donation, two year adoption at "high traffic" access point**
- **Green Sea Turtle Level - \$250 donation, two year adoption at "low traffic" access point**
- **Loggerhead Sea Turtle Level - \$100 donation, two year adoption, paired with another adopting entity**
- **Beach Mouse Level - \$30 donation, individual donation, teamed up with another adopting entity**

Varying levels of adoption receive different levels of recognition. All adoptees receive the Quarterly Newsletter "Keep our Beaches Beautiful", t-shirts, clean up supplies, signage, an annual luncheon, and other surprise gifts.

Dune Sunflower (*Helianthus debilis*)



St. Johns County
Recreation & Parks
2175 Mizell Rd.
St. Augustine, FL 32080

Tara Dodson
HCP Coordinator
904-209-3740 (office)
904-227-0023 (pager)
(enter area code and phone #)

Email: tdodson@sjcfl.us

Scott Eastman
Beach Lighting Officer
904-209-0323

Email: seastman@sjcfl.us

Web Site:
www.sjcfl.us/HCP/index.aspx

Featured Spotlight

St. Johns County Beach Services is seeking the assistance of two summer interns for the 2008 sea turtle nesting season. Interns will work under the direct supervision of the Habitat Conservation Coordinator. The position is available from May 15 until the end of the season, which can be negotiated. Field Assistants should be available up to 40 hours per week to provide support for the Marine Turtle Nest Rut Removal Program and be responsible for the following tasks:

- Responsible for removal of vehicle ruts immediately adjacent to marine turtle nest
- Provide logistical support to Habitat Conservation Coordinator through daily documentation of rut removal procedures and communication with Marine Turtle Permit Holders
- Provide a summary report at the end of the marine turtle season to Habitat Conservation Coordinator

Persons interested should be someone interested in pursuing a degree/career in biology, conservation biology, wildlife management, or relevant field. A basic knowledge of marine turtle nesting activities and conservation is a must as well as a willing to facilitate communication between support staff and Marine Turtle Permit Holders. Individuals should be able to endure physical stress in the performance of field duties, including heat, fatigue, and physical exertion. Excellent verbal and writing skills, willing to work nights and weekends are must. A bi-weekly stipend is provided.

To Apply

Send resume, cover letter, and three (3) references to:
St. Johns County Beach Services
Habitat Conservation Coordinator
2175 Mizell Road
St. Augustine, FL 32080

Or email to: tdodson@sjcfl.us



Support the Sea Turtle
License Plate
www.helpingseaturtles.org

Florida Sea Turtle Grants
Program
Caribbean Conservation
Corporation
4424 NW 13th St., Suite #B11
Gainesville, FL 32609
Phone: (352) 373-6441
Fax: (352) 375-2449
Email:
stgp@helpingseaturtles.org



Off Beach Parking Locations

Mickler's Landing
Guana
South Ponte Vedra
Recreation Area
North Beach Park
Surfside
Vilano Town Center
Pope Road
St. Augustine Beach
Mary Street
Butler Park
Crescent Beach
Spyglass Park
Fort Matanzas

For more information about the above locations, log onto http://www.sjcfl.us/BCC/Parks_1_Recreation/Beaches/Access.aspx

Beach Season Pass Fees

Season Pass Fee (Limit 1 per vehicle):

- County Resident - \$40.00
- Non-resident - \$50.00

Daily Fees:

- County Resident - \$6.00
- Non-Resident - \$7.00

Beach passes can be purchased at toll booths as accessing vehicle ramps.

For more information about passes, please call **Beach Services at (904) 209-0333**.