2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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seaturtlespacecoast.org

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FULFILLING OUR MISSION

Since STPS began in the 1980's, our mission and vision have been our guiding principles. As we've grown over the last 36 years, we've developed a multifaceted approach to fulfilling our mission by creating a variety of different programs, engaging in our community, and supporting other sea turtle conservation groups.

Many of our program activities are authorized by Marine Turtle Permits (MTPs) from Florida's Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). These efforts include responding to reports of dead and injured sea turtles; rescuing hatchlings, post hatchlings and adult sea turtles and transporting them to permitted rehabilitation facilities; and conducting nest surveys. Furthermore, data collected by our volunteers during these activities is reported to FWC which uses it to help reduce the effects of human activities on sea turtles and identify areas in Florida that need additional protection.

Community outreach is an essential part of our programs. STPS reaches thousands of people each year through our turtle night walks, educational talks, our Turtle Talk 101 online presentations, monthly beach cleanups, annual Turtle Krawl 5K fundraiser, exhibits at local events, our website and Facebook page, monthly meetings, our Turtle House, and Turtle Nest. Our primary goal is to teach the public about sea turtles, the threats they encounter, and how everyone can help.

Lastly, STPS supports our local sea turtle conservation community. For example, in 2022, we provided funding for satellite transmitters to University of Central Florida's Marine Turtle Research Group (MTRG). We also made a donation to Brevard Zoo's Sea Turtle Healing Center where we transport many of the sick or injured sea turtles that we rescue.

MEET OUR MEMBERS

STPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

All board members serve as non-paid volunteers. The board determines the direction of the corporation and the appropriate courses of action. Board members who are permit holders train volunteers for various STPS programs. The board also recognizes individual volunteers for exceptional performance and approve donations to other sea turtle conservation organizations. The 2022 board members are listed below.

2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS	
Susan Skinner, Chairperson	Kathy LeBresco, Treasurer
Lisa Littleton, Secretary	Amy Durham Shea
Diana Forman	John Pechar
Kelly Etherton	Noelle Villanueva
Dori Hughes, Nesting Survey Permit Holder	Craig Konkel, Night Walks Permit Holder
Dan Schaller Stranding & Salvage Permit Holder	Ken Smith, Transport Permit Holder

MEMBERS

The strength and support of our STPS members fuels our mission of sea turtle conservation. By sharing our message, members raise awareness of the plight of sea turtles and the work that needs to be done. Members are committed to our local sea turtle conservation efforts, and their membership fees support these programs. We ended 2022 with 1008 members in 771 memberships. Our membership includes individuals from 32 states, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

VOLUNTEERS

STPS volunteers are the heart of our programs. Without our dedicated volunteers, STPS would not be able to accomplish our mission. Everyone – from the Board of Directors to hotline monitors to Turtle Krawl 5K race-day helpers – is a volunteer.

2022 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR / ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

2022's Volunteer and Rookie of the Year is Cyndi Stinson. Cyndi joined STPS in January 2022 and took on the role of Turtle Krawl 5K race director and sponsorship coordinator. She pulled together an amazing event for our largest fundraiser. She is also part of the Stranding & Salvage team. Pictured right is Cyndi responding to the stranding of a green sea turtle.

VOLUNTEER VALUE

In December of 2022, STPS had just over 400 volunteers. The table below lists the total volunteer hours recorded in 2022 and the value determined by the Independent Sector's estimate for volunteer labor in Florida. Total volunteer value to STPS was calculated to be **$387,033.54** at $29.41 per hour.

2022 STPS VOLUNTEER VALUE		
Assignment	**Hours**	**Dollar Value**
Beach Cleanup	1,148.25	$ 33,770.03
Board Duties	233	$ 6,852.53
Building Committee	7.25	$ 213.22
Committees	3.75	$ 110.29
Communication	93	$ 2,735.13
Donations and Adoptions	51.75	$ 1,521.97
Education	662.75	$ 19,491.48
Events	508.83	$ 14,964.69
Fundraising	118.50	$ 3,485.09
Hotline	1,110.25	$ 32,652.45
Membership	26.25	$ 772.01
Miscellaneous	47	$ 1,382.27
Monthly Membership Meetings	39.75	$ 1,169.05
Nesting Surveys	1,240.50	$ 36,483.11
Outreach	370.25	$ 10,889.05
STERP	157.25	$ 4,624.72
Stranding & Salvage	1282	$ 37,703.62
Training/Professional Development	818.75	$ 24,079.44
Transport	98	$ 2,882.18
Turtle Krawl 5K	699.25	$ 20,564.94
Turtle Nest -Port Canaveral	1,922.50	$ 56,540.73
Turtle Walks	2,246.60	$ 66,072.51
Volunteer Helpers	3.50	$ 102.94
Volunteer Management	248.50	$ 7,308.39
Website	15.50	$ 455.86
World Sea Turtle Day	7	$ 205.87
TOTALS	**13,159.93**	**$387,033.54**

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

BEACH CLEANUPS

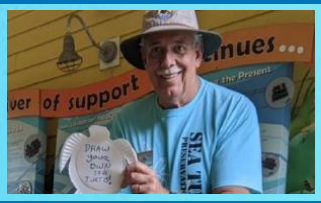
731 volunteers participated in **20** cleanups resulting in **1,462** service hours. **238** community service students also participated.

NESTING SURVEYS

Volunteers documented **404** total nests: **396** loggerheads, **6** greens, and **2** leatherbacks. This was a record high number of nests for the STPS Survey Program.

TURTLE NIGHT WALKS

965 guests attended. Saw a nesting loggerhead on **30** of our **38** walks. **20** guests from **six** foreign countries. (Photo by Joel Cohen.)



EDUCATION

Completed **over 12** summer reading events at Brevard libraries. Continued updates to Education Center with **$7,500** grant from the Sea Turtle Grants Program.

STRANDING & SALVAGE

The hotline received nearly **1,900** stranding calls. Team responded to **422** events: **277** hatchlings and **145** post-hatchlings and older sea turtles.

TRANSPORT

371 transports (**327** in personal vehicles) resulting in **15,824** recorded miles. STPS van was driven **44** times for rescues and transports.

SEA TURTLE RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION

$10,000 donation to UCF's Marine Turtle Research Group (MTRG). **$7,500** donation to the Brevard Zoo's Sea Turtle Healing Center.

TURTLE KRAWL 5K

2022 Turtle Krawl 5K had almost **1,500** participants including **250** virtual racers. Financial support was provided by **10** corporate sponsors.

BEACH CLEANUPS

Our monthly cleanup events at Cherie Down Beach (Cape Canaveral) and Coconut Point Beach (South A1A Melbourne Beach) welcomed both STPS members and the public and offered community service hours for students. Many attendees join our cleanups as groups of friends or members of clubs and work groups.

In 2022, an additional cleanup opportunity for STPS members became a reality. The “On Your Own Cleanup” response to the limitations on group cleanups in 2021 provided a new “Individual Reporter” option. STPS also participated in the International Coastal Cleanup in September with Keep Brevard Beautiful. The results have significantly improved participation as shown in the following statistics for the year.

2022 BEACH CLEANUPS				
Program Type	**Number of Cleanups**	**Number of Volunteers**	**Number of Hours**	**Community Service Students**
Monthly Events	20	731	1,462	238
Individual Reporter	639	1,122	1,655	N/A
TOTALS	**659**	**1,853**	**3,117**	**238**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

STPS EVENTS

STPS volunteers love to educate the public at local events and sell our sea turtle merchandise. In 2022, we had an increase in events after the slowdown due to COVID. STPS participated in 10 events and volunteers logged more than 500 hours. Events included the Ocean Treasures Festival in February, Ron Jon Surf Shop's Beach 'N Boards Fest in March, Long Doggers' Beach Bash in July, and the Ocean Reef Beach Festival in December. Some of our 2022 events are shown below.

STPS Booth at the Ocean LegaSEA Fest Hosted by the BeachFly Brewing Company in Rockledge, July 30, 2022.

Open House and World Sea Turtle Day Celebration at the Turtle Nest Kiosk at Port Canaveral, June 11, 2022.

STPS Volunteers Sell Sea Turtle Merchandise at Nance Park, July 30, 2022.

COMMUNICATIONS

STPS communicates with our members and the general public through our website and our social media platforms listed below. Our communication team creates a quarterly membership newsletter, writes blog posts on educational and conservation topics, and posts on STPS social media. Our social media presence allows us to engage more people and get them involved in our activities and sea turtle conservation.

STPS Website: seaturtlespacecoast.org	**STPS Blog:** Loggerhead Lowdown
STPS on Facebook: Sea Turtle Preservation Society	**STPS on Twitter (now X):** seaturtleps
Turtle Krawl 5K Website: turtlekrawl.com	**STPS on Instagram:** seaturtleps
STPS Newsletter: Turtle Talk	**YouTube:** STPS-Brevard Cnty FL

2022 PHOTO CALENDAR CONTEST

In 2022, STPS held a sea turtle photo contest. The top 30 pictures were posted on our Facebook page and the 12 with the most "likes" were included in our STPS 2023 Photo Calendar sold in the STPS Gift Shop.

Harvey Levine

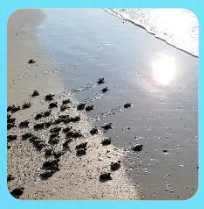
Cindy Lang

Kelly Carroll

Saurabh Chakraborty

Charlotte Raabe

Monica Malone



Monica Malone

Ruthi Jackson

PeiJai Howard

Syndney Taft Cole

Syndney Taft Cole

Harvey Levine

NESTING SURVEYS

The 2022 nesting season wrapped up in October. STPS surveyors had a record-setting year!

In 2022, volunteers documented 404 total nests within our two-mile survey area in Cocoa Beach. This total included 396 loggerheads, 6 greens, and 2 leatherbacks. This is a record high number of nests for the STPS survey program.

The teams also documented 785 loggerhead false crawls and 17 green false crawls. When Hurricane Ian arrived, most nests had emerged and only 6 nests on the beach were lost.

All nest survey data collected by our dedicated volunteers is reported to Florida's FWC and contributes to the state's nesting totals for the year which are shown below.

2022 FLORIDA SEA TURTLE NESTING TOTALS

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) has compiled the Florida Statewide Nesting Beach Survey data for 2022. On Florida's East Coast, Brevard County had the highest number of sea turtles which emerged and laid their eggs. The totals shown below were extracted from the survey data found on the 2022 Statewide Nesting Totals page on the FWRI website.

2022 FLORIDA SEA TURTLE NESTING TOTALS – STATEWIDE			
SPECIES	**Loggerhead**	**Green**	**Leatherback**
BREVARD COUNTY TOTALS	31,623	17,464	143
2022 STATE TOTALS	116,765	37,028	1,848
STATE TOTALS DIFFERENCE FROM 2021	**+19,741**	**+4,348**	**+458**

TURTLE NIGHT WALKS

We had a very successful night walk season in 2022. The turtle walk team was able to display a nesting loggerhead on 30 of our 38 walks. That's a 78.95% success rate!

We had 965 guests attend our walks at three different locations: Pelican Beach Park, Spessard Holland North Park, and the Turtle House. Our guests came from 32 states other than Florida and 20 were from six foreign countries including Canada, United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Switzerland.

We had a great bunch of new volunteers – 32 of them – as well as our returning "night crawler" veterans.

MTP #21-246
© Joel B Cohen

EDUCATION

In 2022, education volunteers shared their love of sea turtles through presentations and programs, including participating in more than a dozen summer reading events at Brevard County libraries. In March, STPS expanded its education activities to include a weekly Saturday outreach table inside Brevard Zoo (see photos below). These volunteers received extra training to learn about the Sea Turtle Healing Center and are able to help with public sea turtle releases as well.

The STPS Education Program continued to update and modernize the current Education Center (shown right) at the Turtle House in Indialantic with a $7,500 grant through the Sea Turtle Grants Program. The redesign features interactive displays that guide visitors through the life cycle of a sea turtle and the ways in which STPS helps sea turtles survive. The updated Education Center is expected to open in Summer of 2023.

Also in 2022, the STPS Education team partnered with Inwater Research Group to provide Traveling Trunks to educators in Brevard County. The Traveling Trunks program includes free, STEM-based learning activities which focus on sea turtle biology and sea turtle friendly lighting. Trunks contain all the hands-on materials and lessons teachers need to introduce their students to the world of sea turtles. Lessons are designed for students in 3rd to 8th grade.

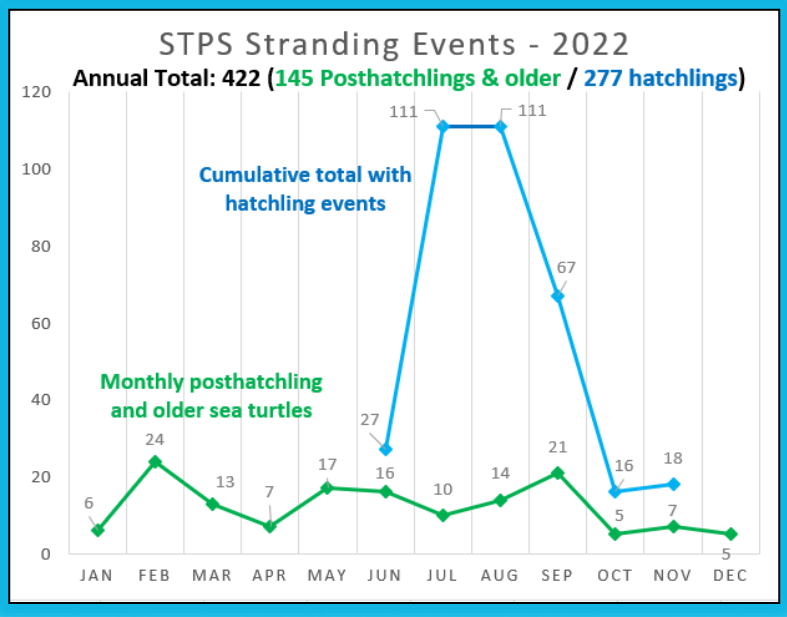
STRANDING & SALVAGE

RESCUE AND TRANSPORT OPERATIONS

The STPS Stranding & Salvage team responds to reports of dead, sick, or injured sea turtles as directed by the Florida FWC. STPS also operates a hotline for sea turtle emergencies that is monitored around the clock. The hotline received nearly 1,900 stranding calls in 2022 with an average of 158 calls each month.

2022 was very active with an extremely productive nesting season. As normal, July was the peak hotline call month with 433 in-bound calls. Both our Stranding and Transport programs operate under state permits, and their volunteers have been trained by both FWC staff and STPS permit holders. STPS also maintained a rescue van at the Port Canaveral staging point during the year to aid with rescues and transports. While used for other STPS activities, the STPS van was also driven 44 times for rescues and transports in 2022.

During 2022, the Stranding team responded to 422 stranding and salvage events (see graphic below). The official numbers recorded by FWC are indicated in the green line, which accounts for post-hatchlings and older sea turtles. There were 145 post-hatchlings and older sea turtles assisted by STPS Stranding & Salvage events in 2022. This included 81 live and 64 deceased sea turtles. The 277 hatchling events involved assistance to 701 hatchlings by the Stranding team personnel resulting in 311 released and 205 transported to the Sea Turtle Healing Center. Between the Stranding and Transport teams, there were 371 transports (327 in personal vehicles) conducted in 2022 resulting in 15,824 recorded miles by these passionate sea turtle volunteers.



STRANDING & SALVAGE VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

Green Hatchling Rescued by Carrie Hinojosa.

Cyndi Stinson Responds to the Stranding of a Green Sea Turtle.

Loggerhead Recovered and Transported to the Sea Turtle Healing Center by Linda Rutland.

Adult Female Green Stuck under a Cross-over. Shagg Catri Assisted and Freed.

Dan Schaller Documented a Female Loggerhead Skeleton Reported to FWC.

Green Hatchling Recovered by Linda Baxter. Held Overnight and Released the Next Day.

Juvenile Green Rescued and Transported to the Sea Turtle Healing Center by Linda Rutland and Jerry Lemon. Rehabbed and released.

SEA TURTLE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM (STERP)

The STERP team consists of STPS volunteers who are trained annually on rescue procedures. When called, they search different zones on Brevard County beaches. This program is designed to increase the number of post-hatchling sea turtles that are rescued, rehabilitated, and eventually released back into the ocean. Assisted by the Stranding & Salvage team, the Transport team, and the hotline monitors, these STPS volunteers ensure tiny sea turtles are provided their best chance for survival.

During 2022, Brevard County experienced weather conditions requiring the activation of the STERP volunteers. This year's only STERP event was conducted for two days (September 30th and October 1st) after Hurricane Ian passed through Brevard. Our STERP volunteers conducted 84 individual zone searches and recovered 24 post-hatchlings (also known as washbacks). The efforts resulted in the recovery of 8 live and 16 dead sea turtle hatchlings/post-hatchlings.

STERP completed its fifteenth year on December 31, 2022. The community response to this program continues to be as enthusiastic as the first year it was initiated. During May and June 2022, there were 121 volunteers trained for the STERP program through four live and two online webinars which resulted in the annually issued Letters of Authorization from FWC to participate in the program.

Post-hatchling Recovered by Linda Rutland.

STERP Volunteer Searches for Post-hatchlings in Seaweed Washed Ashore.

SEA TURTLE RELEASES

On January 26, 2022, STPS volunteers released Kringle, a subadult loggerhead sea turtle, at Spessard South Beach Park (see photos below). Kringle had been at the Brevard Zoo's Sea Turtle Healing Center since December 4th after the turtle had stranded at the St. Lucie Power Plant and was brought to the healing center by an STPS transport volunteer.

During the second week of August, STPS volunteers were able to assist with the release of two rehabilitated sea turtles. On Tuesday, August 9th, the Brevard Zoo's Sea Turtle Healing Center released Myrtle at Lori Wilson Park in Cocoa Beach (shown below on the left). STPS volunteers played a part in Myrtle's recovery and were on hand to help educate beachgoers about sea turtles during the release.

On Wednesday, August 10th, Tri was released at Pelican Beach Park in Satellite Beach. STPS stranding volunteer Jo-Ellen Matthews (shown below on the right) released the juvenile green sea turtle after having responded to the original stranding in February 2022. The turtle was transferred from the Sea Turtle Healing Center to Clearwater Marine Aquarium for rehabilitation due to space limitations.

SEA TURTLE RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION

UCF MARINE TURTLE RESEARCH GROUP (MTRG)

In May 2022, the STPS Board of Directors approved a $1,000 donation in memory of Dr. Llewelyn Earhart to a UCF scholarship fund created in his honor. The board also continued its support of UCF researcher Dean Bagley and her satellite transmitter work with a donation of $10,000. Although, Bagley was not able to tag any green sea turtles in the 2022 season, she used the funding in 2023 (see UCF MTRG's photos below).

STPS Board Member Kathy LeBresco (left) with Dean Bagley and Her Team (June 2021).

Female (top) and Male (bottom) Green Sea Turtles Tagged in 2023 with 2022 STPS Funding.

BREVARD ZOO'S SEA TURTLE HEALING CENTER

Back in 2013, STPS entered into a three-year partnership with Brevard Zoo to create a sea turtle rehabilitation facility that would care for injured and sick rescued sea turtles in Brevard County. In April 2014, the Sea Turtle Healing Center opened at the zoo.

Since then, STPS has transported many rescued sea turtles into their care. We also continue to fund the facility on an annual basis. In October 2022, STPS donated $7,500 to the Sea Turtle Healing Center.

FUNDRAISING

Throughout 2022, STPS held multiple fundraising events including our turtle night walks during nesting season, World Sea Turtle Day Auction in June, and Turtle Krawl 5K in September. Some of our other fundraisers were “Earth Day Dine Out Night for Sea Turtles” at Long Doggers in April, “Painting with a Purpose” in June, and “Dine to Donate” at Texas Roadhouse in August (see photos below).

STPS has additional sources of funding such as merchandise sales at our online STPS Gift Shop and locally at the Turtle House, Turtle Nest, and various community events. We also have corporate-sponsored promotions (e.g., our Turtle Krawl 5K sponsors), the Adopt a Sea Turtle program, direct donations (from organizations, corporations, and individuals), grant funding, and annual membership fees.

2022 Fundraising Events and Adopt a Sea Turtle Program

“Painting with a Purpose” Event on June 5, 2022 raised over $1,000 for STPS.

TURTLE KRAWL 5K

All proceeds from the Turtle Krawl 5K on September 10, 2022 funded STPS programs and activities, including rescue and transport of injured sea turtles, nesting surveys, turtle night walks, and other educational outreach programs. Additionally, some of the funds raised were donated to the Brevard Zoo's Sea Turtle Healing Center and UCF's Marine Turtle Research Program (MTRG) for satellite transmitters.

Special thanks to new race director, Cyndi Stinson, who did a great job organizing the event. The Turtle Krawl 5K was a success thanks to the many volunteers who helped out (see photos below). This year's race had approximately 1,500 registered participants including about 250 who signed up for the virtual race.

A special thanks to our 2022 race sponsors: SeaWorld Orlando, Hannah-Chanel Fund, Dale Sorenson Real Estate, Joel Likes To Photo, Subaru of Melbourne, Buckingham Wealth, Running Zone, Omni Healthcare, Coastal Health Systems of Brevard, and Ron Jon Surf Shop.

The following businesses supported the 2022 Turtle Krawl 5K through in-kind donations: Running Zone, Kennedy Space Center, Islands Fish Grill, American Divers International, 4th Street Fillin Station, Winn-Dixie, Grills Tiki Restaurant, Walmart, Long Doggers, Suntree Produce, B&B Ice, Sam's Club, Ocean Sports, Einstein Bagels, Starbucks, Krispy Kreme, Basket of Jewelry, Nancy Claunch, Cocoa Beach Adventures, Gator Golf, Dollar General, McDonalds, and Genna Pizza.

LEARN MORE ABOUT STPS

Sea Turtle Preservation Society
111 South Miramar Avenue
Indialantic, FL 32903
Office/Gift Shop: 321-676-1701
Sea Turtle Emergency Hotline: 321-206-0646

STPS Website: seaturtlespacecoast.org

STPS on Facebook: Sea Turtle Preservation Society

STPS Gift Shop Website: STPS Gift Shop

STPS Gift Shop on Facebook: Facebook – STPS Gift Shop

Turtle Krawl 5K Website: turtlekrawl.com

STPS on YouTube: STPS-Brevard Cnty FL

STPS on Twitter (now X): seaturtleps STPS on Instagram: seaturtleps

For general inquiries, please email us at: STPS@SeaTurtleSpaceCoast.org.

STPS is a registered 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible as allowable by law. STPS is a grassroots, all-volunteer organization that is not associated with any parent corporation nor supported by any government funding. There are no financial stakeholders or a single owner that profits from any of our fundraising activities. The source of our funding is through our proceeds from a multitude of fundraising activities and events including Turtle Krawl 5K, Turtle Night Walks, gift shops, membership dues, and donations. The proceeds from our fundraising efforts are used to pay for items needed to support our headquarters and various programs (rent, insurance, equipment, supplies, and transportation). STPS relies on the efforts of its dedicated volunteers to accomplish essentially all of our tasks. The only exception is that we pay to staff one person at each of our gift shops (Turtle House and Turtle Nest) when they are open. A copy of the official registration for STPS may be obtained from the Florida division of consumer services by calling toll-free within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the state. The toll-free number of the department is (800) HELP-FLA (435-7352) when calling from within the state of Florida, or (850) 410-3800 when calling from outside of Florida. The department's website is http://www.fdacs.gov/ConsumerServices. The Sea Turtle Preservation Society serves the community without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, or mental/physical disability. Photographs taken during specific STPS activities (Stranding & Salvage, Transport, Nesting Surveys and Turtle Walks) are authorized under FWC Marine Turtle Permit (MTP) numbers MTP-067, MTP-142, MTP-169, MTP-246, and MTP-258.