Sea Turtle Preservation Society

Year In Review

2020
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As 2020 unfolded, the global community – and the Sea Turtle Preservation Society – faced unprecedented challenges in a world turned upside down by the Covid-19 pandemic.

As sea turtle nesting season geared up, the populated world shut down. With a mission to accomplish, our all-volunteer organization focused on what needed to be done and how to do it.

We would like to acknowledge our many members, volunteers and supporters who have kept our sea turtle conservation efforts on track during these uncertain times. Your dedication, enthusiasm, and generosity have been a light in an otherwise dark time.

Looking ahead, we will continue to work to protect sea turtles and their habitat and bring about our vision of a world where sea turtles thrive.

Susan Skinner  
STPS Chairperson

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**Board of Directors 2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>BOARD POSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Susan Skinner</td>
<td>STPS Chair &amp; Director of Communications and Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Littleton</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathy LeBresco</td>
<td>Treasurer &amp; Gift Shop Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Shea</td>
<td>Co-Director of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lori Loftus</td>
<td>Co-Director of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave Cheney</td>
<td>Transport Permit Holder &amp; Director of STERP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dori Hughes</td>
<td>Nesting Survey Permit Holder &amp; Monthly Meetings Committee Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craig Konkel</td>
<td>Turtle Night Walks Permit Holder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jax Maisto</td>
<td>Director of Membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Schaller</td>
<td>Stranding and Salvage Permit Holder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Noelle Villanueva</td>
<td>Director of Events &amp; Director of Fundraising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diana Forman</td>
<td>Member-at-Large &amp; Advocacy Committee Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Pechar</td>
<td>Member-at-Large &amp; Building Committee Chair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The past year has been an unprecedented one for the world, the community, and the Sea Turtle Preservation Society. Our organization faced many challenges in 2020, but we continued to find ways to accomplish our mission. At the start of the pandemic, STPS canceled in-person programs and activities while continuing with essential work, such as rescue operations and nesting surveys, following all government orders and CDC protocols. Both the Turtle House and the Turtle Nest kiosk were closed for six weeks.

Our STPS volunteers stepped up and found ways to keep the organization moving forward in a safe manner.

- Through Zoom and other applications, STPS was able to offer online training classes, programs, and presentations to our members, volunteers, and the public. We started offering virtual monthly meetings on Zoom to stay connected with our members and the community. Volunteer training also took place online, so that new volunteers could continue to join our conservation efforts.
- The Turtle House and Turtle Nest reopened in June with limited hours and new cleaning and safety protocols. Online shopping options were expanded to accommodate those not able to visit in person.
- The annual World Sea Turtle Day open house grew into a 10-day virtual celebration, with educational messages on social media, Facebook story times, giveaways and online shopping specials.
- The night walk season was canceled to protect the health and safety of both our volunteers and guests.
- The Turtle Krawl 5K fundraising event went virtual, and 1,007 people participated to raise funds for our sea turtle conservation programs.

As the year went on, virtual became the new normal. Board meetings along with all other in-person group activities of 10 or more took place online. Volunteers worked hard behind the scenes as always doing the day-to-day work of the organization. Education volunteers have continued to teach day camps, scout groups, classrooms, and others about sea turtles using Zoom and other applications.

The Sea Turtle Preservation Society was fortunate to receive a $10,000 grant through the Brevard County Small Business and Nonprofit Economic Relief program in August 2020. These funds helped offset revenue lost due to the cancellation of the night walk season, the closure of the gift shops, and the Turtle Krawl 5K being a virtual only event.
Volunteers are the heart of the Sea Turtle Preservation Society. Without these dedicated individuals, our organization would not be able to accomplish its mission. STPS started as a grassroots organization more than 30 years ago, and it continues to operate with this same attitude today. Everyone – from the board of directors to hotline monitors to Turtle Krawl course monitors – is a volunteer.

In 2020, STPS had 384 active volunteers who contributed 5,477 hours to the organization. The pandemic changed the face of our volunteer program in 2020. Many dedicated, hardworking volunteers found themselves sidelined due to cancellations and pandemic protocols. The nesting survey program was limited to a few essential volunteers, and the night walk program was canceled entirely. Festivals, events, and education presentations were canceled. These changes left many volunteers without a task. Their patience and understanding as STPS worked through these new challenges has been greatly appreciated. Some of our volunteers took this time to sew masks for area health-care workers. Others took the time to revise, redesign and expand our educational offerings. Many found new ways to make a difference in STPS and the community.

While volunteer participation was limited in 2020, the STPS board of directors recognized four individuals who went above and beyond during the year: Helen Bachtell, Dan Schaller, Ken Smith, and Susan Smith. Helen serves as the STPS children’s education coordinator. She created many new educational offerings for the virtual World Sea Turtle Day celebration and has been doing presentations on Zoom throughout the year. Dan Schaller participates on the stranding team as well as the nest survey team. Ken Smith volunteers in several roles, including the transport team, nesting surveys, and the Sea Turtle Healing Center liaison committee. He steps up to help keep the rescue trucks on the road and many other needed chores. Susan Smith serves on the policy and finance committees and participates in nest surveys and on the education team. She worked hard during 2020 researching and working on policies, including a new budget procedure, and anywhere else she was needed.

2020 Volunteers of the Year

Helen Bachtell  
Dan Schaller  
Ken Smith  
Susan Smith
Florida hosts 90 percent of the sea turtle nests laid in the United States each season, and Brevard County’s 72 miles of beaches are part of the largest nesting aggregation site of loggerhead sea turtles in the world. Three of the world’s seven species of sea turtles nest regularly on our beaches.

Hosting more than 40 percent of the nests laid globally, Florida is the most important nesting area for loggerheads in the world. In 2020, more than 105,000 loggerhead sea turtle nests were recorded on Florida’s beaches.

Florida’s beaches are also home to the largest nesting aggregation of green sea turtles in North America. In 2020, more than 26,000 green sea turtle nests were recorded in the state.

The state also serves as a minor leatherback nesting area. In 2020, 1,652 leatherback nests were recorded statewide.

Brevard County is unique because the Atlantic beaches span its entire length on the east, and the Indian River Lagoon System spans its length on the west. The beaches regularly provide nesting sites for loggerhead, green, and leatherback sea turtles. The Indian River Lagoon provides important foraging grounds for sea turtles as well.

As an indicator species for ocean health, sea turtles play important roles in the ocean and coastal ecosystems, including:

- Controlling habitat as “lawnmowers of the ocean” to keep seagrasses and other vegetation healthy;
- Providing checks and balances in the food web as sea turtles consume different species to keep the system in balance;
- Nourishing beaches through the depositing of eggs and eggshell decomposition, which is called nutrient cycling;
- Serving as a food source for other animals. Eggs, hatchlings, and young turtles provide an essential food source for others.

When sea turtles mature and are ready to nest, they typically return to the same region where they were hatched. This makes Brevard County’s beaches a critical habitat for sea turtles.

Six of the seven species of sea turtles are found in U.S. waters; all of these sea turtles are listed and protected under the Endangered Species Act. It is illegal to harm, harass or kill any sea turtles, hatchlings or their eggs. It is also illegal to import, sell, or transport turtles or their products.

For these reasons, the Sea Turtle Preservation Society has worked for more than 30 years to protect sea turtles and their habitat in Brevard County.
OBSTACLES ON THE BEACH

Beach furniture, umbrellas, sandcastles and holes are dangerous for nesting sea turtles and hatchlings.

PLASTIC INGESTION

It is estimated that more than 50 percent of the world’s sea turtles have eaten plastic waste. This can block the intestines or cause the turtle to feel full and not eat a nutritious diet.

ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING

Lights on the beach can disorient sea turtles during nesting or hatching. Hatchlings will follow the brightest light, often leading them to the roads instead of the ocean.

BOAT STRIKES

Vessel-related injuries are the No. 1 cause for sea turtle strandings. Florida is the recreational boating capital of the U.S.

ENTANGLEMENTS

Sea turtles can become entangled in fishing gear and other marine debris. Entanglements can inhibit movement, trap sea turtles underwater and cause soft tissue injuries.

BEACH DEVELOPMENT

Seawalls, coastal development and beach renourishment can affect sea turtle nesting through loss of nesting habitat and erosion that washes out nests.
What We Do

Education

The primary mission of the Sea Turtle Preservation Society (STPS) is helping sea turtles survive. Educating the public about threats to sea turtles is the most effective method of accomplishing this mission. STPS takes a proactive role in finding ways to educate the public about the dangers our sea turtles face and what the public can do to help.

During the first 10 weeks of 2020, the education team had 22 presentations, events, or activities. As 2020 progressed, the program faced new challenges and a new way of doing business. In mid-March, all in-person activities were canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Without missing a beat, STPS employed remote communication for the purpose of sea turtle education, administrative meetings, and simply touching base with other like minded STPS members and volunteers. The STPS education team became familiar with Zoom, YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. Sea turtle education requests began coming from summer camps, the Girl Scouts, women’s organizations, community centers, and even the Herpetology Society from the University of Missouri. When elementary schools opened in the fall, STPS received requests for classroom presentations and turtle trunks. Recently, an elementary school in Sanford, Florida, scheduled six presentations through WebQuest. Additionally, the STPS education team has provided digital brochures, reading and coloring books, note-taking tools for presentations, and guided lessons for primary age students.

Without hesitation, the STPS education team met expectations through remote learning to provide differentiated education options for all requests during this unprecedented time in the world, and educated nearly 3,000 individuals during 2020.

Trunks Will Reach More Students

In May 2020, STPS was awarded a $5,000 grant from the Frank and Alice Arguimbau Charitable Fund by the Community Foundation of Brevard to purchase two educational trunks from Inwater Research Group. The purchase of an additional Traveling Turtles trunk and an additional Darker Skies/Darker Beach trunk will double the number of trunks available through STPS for Brevard County educators to use, free of charge. When the Education Program joined the Inwater Research Group’s Initiative in 2019 to help teach the next generation of scientists and environmental stewards they became a provider for the Traveling Turtles Trunk program. The Traveling Turtles trunk teaches the concepts of marine conservation, and students go on a journey through the world of sea turtles.

Turtle Skeleton on Display at Kiosk

In November, a green sea turtle skeleton was put on display at the Turtle Nest kiosk at the Port. The skeleton was assembled by volunteer Dan Schaller to serve as an educational tool. Both residents and visitors will be able to learn more about sea turtles with the addition of the impressive skeleton to the kiosk.
Rebecca Devoid and Her Geocache Series

Girl Scout Senior Rebecca Devoid, a member of Girl Scout Troop 1978 in Melbourne, partnered with STPS on her Gold Award project, a geocache learning series about sea turtles and conservation. The goal of this award project is to bring awareness to an issue in a community and help solve it. Rebecca worked on the project for eight months with a STPS education program volunteer. Her final product was a 10-part interactive learning geocache series that she made available to people in Brevard County, FL, to help raise awareness about sea turtles and the issues they face. Each geocache is unique and features a different issue such as climate change, oil spills, artificial lighting, and much more. She hopes this will encourage people to get outside, explore their community, and learn about sea turtles.

Nesting Surveys

STPS participates in the Florida statewide sea turtle nest monitoring program, which is coordinated by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The primary purpose of this program is to provide annual survey data that is used to determine the nesting trends of the sea turtles that nest on Florida beaches.

During the 2020 season, 24 STPS volunteers walked the two-mile stretch of beach in Cocoa Beach and documented all nests and false crawls. The nesting survey program operated with limited team members based on FWC guidance and followed all government orders and CDC guidelines. Teams surveyed the beach daily from April 15 through Sept. 15 and conducted spot checks through early October.

In 2020, 357 nests were documented by STPS surveyors: 352 loggerhead nests, 4 green nests, and 1 leatherback nest. In addition to these nest totals, STPS surveyors documented 680 false crawls, which occur when a sea turtle comes onto the beach but does not nest. Surveyors also conduct nest success evaluations of marked nests after they hatch. These nest inventories take place three days after signs of emergence, or after 70 days when no emergence is seen. This season more than 60 evaluations were completed. Nest evaluations provide valuable information on sea turtle nesting trends.
Stranding & Salvage

The STPS stranding and salvage team responds to reports of dead, sick, or injured sea turtles as directed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. STPS also operates a hotline for sea turtle emergencies that is monitored around the clock. This program operates under a state permit, and its volunteers have been trained by both FWC staff and STPS permit holders.

When the Covid-19 pandemic began, stranding and rescue operations were deemed an essential service and were able to continue following approved protocols and guidelines, such as limiting contact with beachgoers, wearing masks and more frequent hand washing. The documentation of dead sea turtles was most affected during this time. Overall, in 2020, the stranding team responded to 75 calls about both live and dead sea turtles.

In fulfilling STPS’s mission statement of Helping Sea Turtles Survive, not only do sea turtles benefit but local, county and state governments benefit as well. The federal Endangered Species Act and the Florida Statutes Title XXVIII 379.2431, also known as the Marine Turtle Protection Act, provide protection to threatened and endangered sea turtles. It also requires that only trained and authorized personnel interact with sea turtles, dead or alive. STPS volunteers are permitted and properly trained by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission guidelines.

STPS calculates a dollar value for these hours determined by the Independent Sector Annual Conference Estimate for Volunteer labor in Florida. The value used for this report is the 2020 rate of $27.20 per hour. If local, city or county workers had to perform the same duties as STPS volunteers, they would incur training and labor costs. Based on this dollar value, the cost of 2020 stranding, transport, and STERP activities in Brevard County would be at least $14,150.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BY SPECIES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loggerheads</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greens</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawksbill</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kemps Ridley</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* TOTAL</td>
<td>75</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*These numbers reflect a turtle size of 10 cm and larger.*

Dan Schaller, Stranding Team member

*These numbers reflect a turtle size of 10 cm and larger.*
Our Sea Turtle Emergency Response Program (STERP) volunteers responded to a one-day event on Nov. 10, 2020, after Tropical Storm Eta. More than 100 post-hatchling, or washback, sea turtles got to the care that they needed thanks to the community and STPS volunteers who monitored the hotline, responded to calls, searched the beaches and transported these tiny turtles to the Brevard Zoo’s Sea Turtle Healing Center.

In conjunction with the STPS stranding team, the STERP program provides beach coverage to search for and rescue post-hatchling sea turtles that are washed onto shore after storms and other weather events. This program is designed to increase the number of post-hatchling sea turtles that are rescued, rehabilitated and eventually released back into the ocean. STERP completed its thirteenth year on December 31, 2020. The community response for this program continues to be as enthusiastic as the year it was initiated.

About 120 volunteers were trained for the STERP program through webinars early this summer and received Letters of Authorization from Florida FWC to participate in the program.

Sea Turtle Transport

The Sea Turtle Transport Program was the first of its kind in Florida. The primary mission of the program is to transport sea turtles to and from rehabilitation facilities throughout Florida. STPS ensures that each volunteer is properly trained in specific ways to protect distressed sea turtles from additional injuries during their transport to a rehabilitation facility. Two vehicles were available for transporters: one at Port Canaveral and the other at the Turtle House in Indialantic, FL. Transporters work closely with the stranding permitted team.

- More than 300 post-hatchlings were collected and transported to the Brevard Zoo’s Sea Turtle Healing Center.
- 37 juvenile or adult sea turtles were transported to a facility for care.
- 10 inter-facility transport trips were made by STPS volunteers and equipment.
- 8 transports included partnering with other organizations to hand off sea turtles for longer trips to the Sea Turtle Healing Center.

Emily Skinner, STERP team member

Dan Schaller
**Turtle Walks**

STPS offers educational night walks in June and July during the loggerhead sea turtle nesting season peak in Brevard County. After a short educational presentation, trained and authorized volunteers guide small groups of guests to observe a loggerhead turtle nesting on the beach. This program provides an opportunity for the public to view and learn about the nesting process while protecting the sea turtle. This program is authorized under a permit issued by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

In 2020, STPS did not offer night walks to protect the health and safety of both our volunteers and guests during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Beach Cleanups**

STPS has adopted two areas for Beach Cleanup in Brevard County through the Keep Brevard Beautiful Adopt An Area Program. Monthly beach clean ups help preserve the beaches for our sea turtles and other wildlife in the area. Prior to the onset of the pandemic, the monthly beach cleanups held from January-March at STPS – North at Cherie Down Park in Cape Canaveral and STPS - South Coconut Point Park in the South Beaches, were on the way to a good year. These months showed area students from over 16 different schools found that our monthly cleanups were a great way to earn community service credits. However, because of the pandemic, beach cleanups were cancelled in April. Shagg Catri, long time STPS volunteer, saved the year for STPS’ beach cleanup program. Because of her, the numbers are remarkable and have kept the beach cleanup program alive during this shut-down period. This chart summarizes documented activity for 2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STPS 2020 Annual Beach Cleanup</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Area</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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**Shagg Catri Saved the Year for Beach Cleanups**

When monthly beach cleanups were canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Shagg Catri, a real-estate agent, longtime Melbourne Beach resident and STPS volunteer worked on her own to keep the beaches clean. According to Gerry Burke, STPS beach cleanup coordinator, “the April to December beach cleanup statistics were exclusively provided by Shagg. She saved the year for us.” Catri has been cleaning up the beach for STPS since 2014. Many days each month, Catri is on the beach in the morning most likely with neighbors doing what she loves: picking up litter, recycling and beautifying and sustaining the environment for the benefit of Brevard County residents, tourists and wildlife. Catri is also a member of the STPS stranding team. Her dedication and commitment to helping sea turtles survive is what STPS is all about. In the above totals, Note Shagg’s numbers are reflected in the Individual area of the table.
Monthly Meetings
As part of STPS’s community outreach efforts, STPS hosts a monthly meeting featuring guest speakers discussing topics related to sea turtles or their habitats. These meetings are open to the public as well as STPS members. These meetings were canceled at the start of the pandemic but resumed in June via Zoom. Highlights have been a virtual tour of the Turtle Hospital in the Marathon, FL, and UCF researcher Dean Bagley discussing her sea turtle research.

Communications
In 2020, communication played a key role in STPS efforts to fulfill our mission to help sea turtles survive. Our organization, along with the community and the world, found itself operating in a new, online environment amid the Covid-19 pandemic. The communications team collaborated with other STPS programs to adapt our offerings to a virtual world and continue to share our message of sea turtle conservation.

As one example, STPS worked with NPI Productions to create a public-service announcement called “Sharing the Beach with Sea Turtles”. The video teaches beachgoers how they could help sea turtles and their habitats. The video was distributed to local media outlets, municipalities, nonprofit organizations, and local resorts to reach visitors and residents when in-person presentations and appearances were not possible.

STPS communicated with its members and the public through our website, Loggerhead Lowdown blog, Turtle Times quarterly member newsletter, emails, media releases and social media channels. Livestreams on social media were used in place of in-person appearances at events and festivals to reach as many people as possible with our sea turtle conservation message.

STPS continues to grow our social media presence on Facebook and Instagram. At the end of 2020, more than 167,000 people were following the STPS Facebook page. An increasing social media presence allows STPS to engage more people and get them involved with our organization and sea turtle conservation.

### SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<th></th>
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<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>SEATURTLESPACECOAST.ORG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>FACEBOOK.COM/SEATURTLEPRESERVATIONSOCIETY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gift Shop</td>
<td>FACEBOOK.COM/STPSGIFTSHOP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newsletters</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Blog</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turtle Krawl 5K Run</td>
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<td>Instagram</td>
<td>NINSTAGRAM.COM/SEATURTLEPS/</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteer Social Media</td>
<td>FACEBOOK.COM/STPSVOLUNTEER</td>
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Bette Zirzelbach, from the Turtle Hospital, did a virtual tour at one of the meetings.
All STPS activities are staffed by volunteers. STPS still requires funding to support our activities with equipment, supplies, and transportation. Several fundraising efforts were held throughout the year to support our many activities and projects.

**Turtle Krawl 5K**

This year’s Turtle Krawl took place virtually from Sept. 12-15, and STPS would like to thank the participants, donors, sponsors, and volunteers who made it a success. The STPS board and race committee appreciate everyone’s understanding and patience as the group undertook organizing a fully virtual race event for the first time.

While different from previous years, the Turtle Krawl was still the largest fundraiser of the year for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society. All race proceeds benefit the Sea Turtle Preservation Society’s mission to help sea turtles survive. STPS has been able to fund programs and activities, including rescue and transport of injured sea turtles, nesting surveys, turtle walks and other educational outreach programs as well as satellite transmitters for the UCF marine turtle research program. Funds come from race registration fees and sponsorships from local businesses.

Turtle Krawl registrants received T-shirts with artwork by Indialantic artist, Michael Nemnich. Optional finisher medals were also available.

**Runners from the US & Around the World**

STPS’s 2020 Turtle Krawl 5K virtually reached individual runners from 37 states and territories in the United States and 5 countries around the world! Not only is Turtle Krawl our biggest fundraiser, it also is a great public outreach activity that draws sea turtle lovers from around the world.

### US States & Territories


### Countries

| 4. Spain | 5. Switzerland | |

**1,007 TOTAL TK 5K RUNNERS**
The STPS Board of Directors would like to extend their appreciation to the 2020 Turtle Krawl 5K sponsors.

- Beachside Apartments
- Custom Air and Heat inc.
- Blinds of All Kinds
- Canaveral Port Authority
- Coastal Health Systems of Brevard
- Leslie Jordan Apparel
- Paralegal Boot Camp
- Running Zone
- Sea World Parks & Resorts Orlando
- TK 5K Selfies
- Shelley Michel
- Doris Cash
- Judy Schrader & Lisa
- Rick Hardin
- Debra McPherson
- Jennifer Jeffers
- Cindy Leckie Jordan
World Sea Turtle Day

World Sea Turtle Day on June 16 has always been a big day for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society, and 2020 was no exception. A nine-day virtual celebration kicked off on World Oceans Day, June 8, and included daily educational messages and activities as well as games, virtual story times, live social media events and giveaways. The event wrapped up on World Sea Turtle Day, June 16, as STPS celebrated renowned sea turtle conservationist Archie Carr’s birthday.

While the traditional Open House at the Turtle House was canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic, STPS shared its message of sea turtle conservation through this virtual event. STPS also had the opportunity to be part of a larger celebration, Sea Turtle Week 2020. This event, started by Seeturtles.org in 2019, brings together more than 100 sea turtle groups from around the world to share the message of sea turtle conservation. STPS featured daily themes on different sea turtle species as well as conservation issues in its social media posts as well as on the STPS Loggerhead Lowdown blog as part of Sea Turtle Week 2020.

Membership

The strength and support of our STPS members fuels our mission of sea turtle conservation. STPS values each of our members for their role in helping sea turtles survive. By sharing the message of STPS, 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. In 2020, member benefits were expanded. The year kicked off with new monthly member and volunteer social gatherings, and members and volunteers enjoyed two such events before being canceled due to the pandemic.

* The total number of members in the table (1,007) includes multiple family members included in the Family Membership Level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STPS MEMBERSHIP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifetime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endowment</td>
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<td>Benefactor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honorary Lifetime</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Members</td>
</tr>
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Events

Throughout the year, STPS regularly participates in fundraising events across Brevard County. These events include festivals, such as the Titusville Sea Turtle Festival and the Ocean Reef Beach Festival; business events, such as dine and donate promotions at area restaurants; and community gatherings & organizational events. These events provide STPS with an opportunity to raise funds by selling sea turtle related merchandise to support our conservation activities as well as educating our community about sea turtles. In addition to merchandise for sale, STPS generally provides educational displays and free literature about sea turtles and their conservation. STPS volunteers “talk turtle” and answer questions from the public. In 2020, the STPS events team participated in a total of 2 in-person events while other events were done virtually on social media. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and concern for our volunteers and the general public, numerous events that had been scheduled throughout the 2020 event season were canceled.
Merchandise Sales

STPS offers unique products to the public in our online gift shop, at the Turtle House located in Indialantic, FL, and our Turtle Nest kiosk at Port Canaveral. The wide range of available items has been specifically selected to further promote our educational and conservation goals. For example, we offer reusable drinkware, straws and bamboo silverware as an alternative to single-use plastic cups, silverware and disposable straws. We have gifts for all ages -- from infant and child shirts, toys and books to adult t-shirts, books, kitchen and home decor items -- and are proud of the variety. Our gift shop associates openly share our passion and love for sea turtles with all of our guests. All proceeds from the gift shops directly support STPS and our programs.

Adopt a Turtle Program

The STPS sea turtle adoption program educates the public about the plight of sea turtle while generating funds to support our mission to help sea turtles survive. Three types of adoptions are offered: Adopt a Hatchling, Adopt a Nest, and Adopt a Stranded Turtle. In 2020, STPS unveiled new and improved adoption packages, which are available at both STPS locations and online. The adoption of a sea turtle is purely symbolic as no individual may own this protected species.

Donations

Individual and corporate donations play an important role in funding STPS conservation and education programs. In 2020, individual donors to STPS were especially generous during an unprecedented time, and many corporations also have stepped up to show their support. STPS thanks the following corporate donors:

- Blackbaud Giving
- Central Catholic High School
- Christian Aid Foundation of America
- Cocoa Beach Women's Club
- Community Foundation of Brevard
- CVS Health
- GeoMar
- Good Clean Fun Soaps
- Indian Harbor Beach Garden Club
- Melbourne Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Melbourne Small Business Association
- Nature's Logic
- One Hope
- Paypal Giving Hand
- Sea Life Love
- Viera Woman's Club
- WCYP (Who Cleans Your Pool)
- YOUR CAUSE LLC for BOEING

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<th>ADOPT A TURTLE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adopt a Hatchling</td>
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<td>Adopt a Nest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adopt a Stranded Turtle</td>
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<td>Total Adoptions</td>
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Reusable Straws for Sale in Gift Shops
The Turtle House in Indialantic, FL, is home to the Sea Turtle Preservation Society and includes both an education center and gift shop in addition to the organization’s offices. Visitors will enjoy learning about sea turtles through displays in the education center as well as shopping for sea-turtle themed merchandise in the gift shop. All profits support local sea turtle conservation efforts. The facility is located at 111 S. Miramar Ave.

In 2019, STPS opened a second facility, the Turtle Nest kiosk, at Port Canaveral to expand our reach in Brevard County. The Turtle Nest offers merchandise sales as well as educational displays. The Turtle Nest is located by Cruise Terminal One. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a severe impact on these facilities. In 2020, both locations were closed for six weeks and then reopened with reduced operating hours, which continue currently. For most of 2020, the Turtle House hours were 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. The Turtle Nest hours were 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. In response to these limited hours, STPS increased its online educational offerings to reach more visitors and residents about sea turtle conservation, and online shopping options were expanded on the STPS website to provide an alternative to shopping in person.
In 2020, the Sea Turtle Preservation Society placed a priority on financially supporting the Sea Turtle Healing Center (STHC) during a difficult time. In conjunction with World Sea Turtle Day in June, STPS matched $10,000 in donations to benefit the STHC. STPS recognizes the essential role the center plays in sea turtle conservation in Brevard County, and during these difficult times wanted to ensure that the facility could continue to provide critical emergency and rehabilitative care to sea turtles. By offering a matching donation of up to $10,000, STPS was able to double the impact of the funds raised. The Sea Turtle Community Challenge, administered through the Brevard Zoo, in five days raised more than $24,000 for a total of more than $34,000 with the STPS matching $10,000 donation included.

Dr. Kyle Donnelly, a veterinarian at the Brevard Zoo, surgically removes fibropapillomatosis tumors from a sea turtle patient.
Conferences & Meetings

STPS volunteers have received training to do educational outreach and perform activities authorized under a state permit. STPS volunteers also attend conferences to learn more about sea turtles and their conservation.

- Each year FWC hosts the state Marine Turtle Permit Holders meeting, where STPS volunteers learn more about current issues in Florida and meet their permit requirements. The 23rd Annual Florida Marine Turtle Permit Holder Meeting was held January 17-18, 2020, in Panama City Beach, FL.
- In 2020, the Fifth Annual Southeast Regional Sea Turtle Meeting was held in Corpus Christi, Texas, from February 3-6, 2020. This conference provided STPS volunteers an opportunity to learn and network with other conservation groups from the region.

Fifth Annual Southeast Regional Sea Turtle Meeting

Wendy Collins, Noelle Villanueva, Jax Maisto, Carol Hansen & Dori Hughes

Toys For Tots

A HUGE thank you to everyone that participated in STPS’s first ever Toys for Tots drop off. We were blown away with the generosity of all the donations dropped off for our first ever Toys for Tots drive.

Advocacy Committee Chair

In 2020, the STPS board of directors created a new Advocacy Committee to promote sea turtle conservation within the community. The committee interacts with local and regional governments, special interest groups, businesses, and other nonprofits to support the STPS mission of helping sea turtles survive. The committee has worked with local environmental activists and municipalities on topics such as new beach development and beach lighting issues. Due to the pandemic, the work of this committee has been limited during the past year.
Volunteer Fair

This year’s annual STPS Volunteer Fair was a huge success with more than 50 people attending to learn more about the opportunities available. Representatives from each program were on hand to answer questions and guide everyone through the process of becoming a volunteer. The event was held Feb. 22 next door to the Turtle House in Indialantic.

STPS Volunteers Make Masks for Skilled Nursing Facilities

When STPS volunteers were sidelined by the pandemic, they volunteered to help others in need. When the coronavirus pandemic first began, the elderly and those with significant co-morbidities were considered highest risk for infection. This risk led Helen Bachtell, an STPS volunteer, to ask for others to help in making masks for the residents in Brevard’s skilled nursing facilities. She soon recruited her fellow volunteer and neighbor, Nancy Helms, to begin assembling masks. They created a mask design and got to work. The skilled nursing facilities gathered materials, and Helen alone sewed 50 face masks in three days. She was so inspired that she continued to sew masks with a new design (to hold a filter) to supply her neighbors and friends in her condo. STPS volunteers who helped and continue to help with the sewing of masks include Helen Bachtell, Nancy Helms, Lori Lewis, Dori Hughes, Mary Komives, Nancy Johnson, Karen Lewey, Christine Williams, Sara Spurk, and Kelly Barnes.
STPS is a registered 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible as allowable by law. STPS is a grass roots 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 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 numbers MTP-067, MTP-142, MTP-169 and MTP-258.

Sharing the Beach with Sea Turtles

In response to increased issues with beach lighting and the behavior of beachgoers during nesting season, STPS volunteer Joel Cohen worked with NPI Productions, a cinematography team based in Cocoa Beach, to create a public-service announcement, "Sharing the Beach with Sea Turtles." The video, just under three minutes long, has been made available to area resorts and condos, tourism agencies, local governments, and other conservation groups. The video can be viewed at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5QvF6kghwd4
Sea turtles have roamed the earth for more than 110 million years. However, they face an uncertain future. As a not-for-profit organization, STPS is devoted to helping this imperiled species:

Through education, STPS informs the public about the plight of sea turtles and how they can improve their chances for survival.

By rescuing sick or injured sea turtles, STPS collects data that provides information on how to mitigate this from happening again.

By conducting surveys during nesting season, STPS provides data that helps to determine nesting trends along our beaches and to identify areas of decline and growth of the sea turtle population.