

## LOCAL NEWS

---

**Emilee Speck**, Digital journalist

Published: November 9, 2020, 2:44 pm

Tags: [Brevard County](#), [Volusia County](#), [Flagler County](#), [Weather News](#)

---

# What to do if you find baby sea turtles washed ashore because of tropical weather

Wind, high seas can disrupt sea weed beds, sending hatchlings back to shore



One of the 30 baby sea turtles that washed back to shore, known as washbacks, due to rough seas from Tropical Storm Eta. The young reptiles are now in the care of the Brevard Zoo. (Image: Brevard Zoo) (Brevard Zoo)

**BREVARD COUNTY, Fla.** – Due to the rough seas created by Tropical Storm Eta along Florida’s coast, newly hatched baby sea turtles are being washed up along the shore in Brevard County, according to the Sea Turtle Preservation Society.

The nonprofit said in a statement Monday that it has been seeing an influx of post-hatchling, or washback, sea turtles on Brevard beaches the past two days.

Meanwhile, the Brevard Zoo’s Sea Turtle Healing Center is caring for more than 30 young sea turtles that have “washed back,” known as “washbacks.”

Zoo staff are providing the reptiles with the rest and nutritional support they need until they can be returned to the offshore seaweed line, known as the Sargasso Sea, where they spend this young stage of their life cycle.

If a beachgoer finds a sea turtle, there are certain things the Sea Turtle Preservation Society asks they do and not do with the small sea creatures.

“STPS is seeing an influx of post-hatchling, or washback, sea turtles on our beaches. While we appreciate everyone’s concern for these tiny turtles, please remember that sea turtles are protected by law, and it is illegal to touch one of any size,” STPS board of directors chairperson Susan Skinner said. “Trained STPS volunteers are responding to the situation as conditions allow, so please call STPS for instructions if you do find a post-hatchling on the beach.”



One of the 30 baby sea turtles that washed back to shore, known as washbacks, due to rough seas from Tropical Storm Eta. The young reptiles are now in the care of the Brevard Zoo. (Image: Brevard Zoo) (Brevard Zoo)

If you do happen to find a post-hatchling on the beach, here is what you should and should not do:

- Call the STPS emergency hotline at 321-206-0646 or FWC at 888-404-3922 for guidance.
- Do not put the post-hatchling into the ocean. It likely will not have enough energy to survive, according to STPS.
- Do not place the post-hatchling in water or air conditioning.
- Sea turtles are protected by law, and it is illegal to touch one of any size.
- STPS discourages the public from going out to look for these post-hatchling sea turtles. The nonprofit has a Sea Turtle Emergency Response Program with

volunteers who will survey the beaches. These volunteers have received training and have been authorized by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

The nonprofit said storms, waves and wind can disrupt the Sargasso Sea, where new hatchlings swim to every summer and live in the floating seaweed beds, causing the baby sea turtles to wash ashore with the seaweed.

More information about Tropical Storm Eta and washback [rescue efforts can be found here.](#)

*Copyright 2020 by WKMG ClickOrlando - All rights reserved.*

---

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**



[Emilee Speck](#)

Emilee is a digital journalist for News 6 and ClickOrlando.com, where she writes about space and Central Florida news. Previously, Emilee was a space writer and web editor for the Orlando Sentinel and a producer at the Naples Daily News.

[email](#)