

Marine Turtles on the Sunshine Coast

Strandings:

If you find a marine turtle (live or dead) washed up on the beach anywhere from Sunshine Beach down to the northern side of the Maroochy River, please contact either:

- Coolum District Coast Care turtle monitoring team members:
 - Ben 0416 299 854
 - Stephanie 0412 904 216
 - Leigh 0407 397 018
 - Michelle 0413 597 724
 - Sherida 0403 370 157
 - Susan 0409 807 110
- Marine Strandings Hotline
 - 1300 ANIMAL (264 625)
 - 1300 130 372
 - Shown on the new beach access signs

Nesting:

Marine turtles nest on our beaches from November through to February. They usually make their nest on the dunes, although damage and erosion have made access to our dunes difficult for them – so our turtles generally nest on the beach. Unfortunately, this makes their nests very vulnerable to rough weather, and to accidental damage from people and dogs on the beach.

Coolum District Coast Care turtle monitoring team will record the location of the nest. We also discretely cover nests, to protect eggs and hatchlings from predation by foxes and wild dogs, or accidental damage by people or domestic dogs. And we will monitor the nest until the hatchlings have emerged. Our aim is to intrude as little as possible on the natural process, whilst protecting the nest from predators, erosion, and accidental damage.

You can help us by reporting any turtle tracks that you see on the beach. Tracks look like this:



If you see a turtle nesting – usually at night:

- Turn off all lights, no flash photos, stay still and quiet, keep pets away – nesting turtles are very easily spooked, and will turn around, return to the sea, and dump their eggs if disturbed.
- **Phone us immediately!** We will be able to record some data about the mother turtle, and tag her if she is untagged. And we will be able to tell you what is going on, and help you to enjoy the experience more.

If you see hatchlings running down the beach – usually at night:

- Turn off all lights, no flash photos – hatchlings are sensitive to light – artificial lights can cause them to go in the wrong direction, and flashes can temporarily damage their eyesight.
- **Phone us!**
- Don't help them out of the nest – they need to climb over each other, so it is best to leave them to sort themselves out.
- Allow hatchlings to run down the beach on their own – they are magnetically imprinting their location as they run down the beach, so that they can return here to breed when they are adults.
- Watch your feet – it's really exciting watching hatchlings run to the sea, but they do tend to go all over the place, so make sure that you don't step on one!
- Keep pets away – lots of little twitching things all over the beach can be very exciting for a dog too!
- Its ok to make noises – hatchlings do not have good hearing, and they are too focussed on getting to the sea to be disturbed by noises.
- Enjoy the experience – it is a little bit of nature's magic.