

SEA TURTLE NESTING

APRIL 15TH TO OCTOBER 31ST



Did you know it's Sea Turtle Nesting Season?

ISLAMORADA, VILLAGE OF ISLANDS

Sea turtle nesting may occur on any sandy beach in the Florida Keys but occurs in Islamorada mainly between mile markers 72 and 83, primarily on the Atlantic shoreline. The female turtles come ashore between dusk and dawn, dig a hole in the sand and lay about 100 eggs and then cover the nest with sand. The female turtles return to the ocean and the eggs hatch roughly two months later. The nesting season in the Florida Keys can start as early as March and can run into November. Islamorada's Code of Ordinances defines the sea turtle nesting season as April 15th to October 31st of each year.



Ways you can help

- Never approach or take flash photos of sea turtles. Lights and noise can hinder the turtles' ability to nest or find their way back to the sea. Never try to handle a nesting turtle and do not shine a flash light on a turtle.
- Keep oceans, bays and rivers pollution-free. Take a trash bag with you when you go the beach and remove any trash you see.
- If you find it necessary to mechanically rake your beach, a permit from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) is required. Please call 305-289-7070 for more information.
- Do not place sand, boulders, and landscaping materials or operate vehicles within 100 feet of the high-water line. A permit for these activities is required from both the Village and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). Violators are subject to fines and imprisonment. Please call FDEP at 305-289-7070 for more information.



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Important Ordinances

Islamorada is fortunate to have active sea turtle nests every year and we are committed to protecting the nesting turtles, turtle nests and the fragile hatchlings. Owners of property adjacent to 'Sea Turtle Nesting Areas' have certain responsibilities and must adhere to the Islamorada Code of Ordinances to aid in sea turtle nesting protection. Please also ensure that all visitors and renters are aware of these protective measures.



Islamorada's full code of ordinances regarding sea turtle nesting can be found by scanning the QR code below



- Storage or placement of any material that has the potential to impede movement of hatchlings or adults between ocean and nesting areas or that may cover nesting sites is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, trash and debris, mulch and landscaping materials, vehicles and boats.
- Beach chairs, umbrellas, other outdoor furniture, kayaks and other items must be removed from the beach nightly if turtle nesting activities have been reported. These items may block or entrap sea turtles.
- Artificial lighting must not be visible from the beach. Artificial lighting has been found to prevent adult turtles from coming ashore to nest and disorient hatchling turtles causing them to crawl landward instead of towards the ocean.
- Any development activity occurring on a property mapped as a turtle nesting beach during the nesting season shall require a temporary exclusionary barrier.



If you are not sure if your beach is a 'Sea Turtle Nesting Area' or if you have any questions about sea turtle protection regulations, please call the Village's Environmental Resources Manager, Peter Frezza, at 305-664-6427.