



# Welcome to the Sea Turtle Beach Patrol!

## OBJECTIVE

Monitor a specific stretch of beach for stranded sea turtles. This will allow us to determine where and how often sea turtles, including leatherback turtles and hard-shelled sea turtles, are stranding in the Maritimes.



Photo credit: Canadian Sea Turtle Network

## MATERIALS

### Provided materials

- Weekly data forms (paper or online)
- Incident report form
- Sea turtle identification card
- Garbage bag
- Gloves
- Sea turtle hotline magnet
- Beach patrol safety vest

### Additional required materials

- Digital camera (or cell phone with camera)
- GPS unit or similar smart phone/computer app (e.g., Google Maps, Google Earth)

**Please notify** the Canadian Sea Turtle Network if you need help finding the coordinates of your beach.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Preparing for the beach surveys:

- Please complete and submit the safety waiver and registration form to the Canadian Sea Turtle Network. They can be accessed via our website: <https://seaturtle.ca/patrol-reg/>. You participate in the Sea Turtle Beach Patrol at your own risk.
- Choose the stretch of beach that you would like to monitor. Weekly monitoring of the same beach is a priority to ensure we don't miss any turtles.
- The first time you monitor the beach, mark the beginning point and end point of your survey using your phone or GPS unit. You may also find the coordinates of your beach by looking it up on Google Maps or Google Earth on your computer. Please record the coordinates (latitude and longitude) on the weekly data form. This allows us to determine the location of your beach and the length of beach that you monitored.

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## INSTRUCTIONS continued...

### Conducting the beach surveys:

**Note:** It is ideal to conduct the surveys after high tide, when it is accessible and safe to do so.

- Once per week (weather permitting), and after a storm or persistent high onshore winds, please walk along your designated stretch of beach, from the beginning point to the end point that you marked.
- Walk down the beach searching for stranded turtles following the high-water mark (the highest point that the tide usually covers with water).
- Although the turtles may wash up anywhere, most stranded hard-shelled sea turtles are located at the high-water mark, sometimes tangled in the seaweed that washes up there, so please look very carefully at any debris as you walk by.
- Please ensure that you fill out your weekly data form for each beach walk that you complete.
- Don't worry if you don't find any turtles! It is very rare to find a stranded sea turtle. And it is important to keep in mind that not seeing a turtle also gives us important data about where these incidents tend to happen.



Photo credit: James Rose

### Responding to a stranded sea turtle:

If you find a stranded sea turtle during your walk, please contact the CSTN immediately.

## Toll-free turtle hotline: 1-888-729-4667

### For each stranded turtle, you can help us by:

- Marking the location of the turtle using GPS.
- Taking as many photos of the turtle as you can (see list on "Incident Report" form).
- Indicating the stranding on the weekly data form.
- Completing the incident report form as thoroughly as possible.

### If you are not able to get in touch with the CSTN immediately, please keep the specimen safe.

- Collect the specimen using the gloves and garbage bag provided and bring it somewhere cool and safe for storage, OR
- Move the turtle above the high-water mark to ensure that it is not swept away, and mark it with something that will allow it to be easily found again.