

# FOUND AN INJURED OR DEAD SEA TURTLE ON THE BEACH?

## IS IT REALLY A SEA TURTLE?

SEA TURTLES HAVE FLAT FLIPPERS FOR SWIMMING, NOT LEGS AND FEET WITH THREE OR MORE CLAWS

SEA TURTLES CANNOT RETRACT THEIR HEAD AND FLIPPERS COMPLETELY INTO THEIR SHELL

IF YOU ARE UNSURE WHETHER YOU HAVE A SEA TURTLE, A FRESH-WATER TURTLE, OR A GOPHER TORTOISE, PLEASE CALL ONE OF THE NUMBERS BELOW. PLEASE **DO NOT** TRY TO PLACE THE TURTLE INTO THE OCEAN UNTIL YOUR CALL IS ANSWERED, YOUR ATTEMPTS TO HELP MAY KILL THE ANIMAL!

**PLEASE REPORT INJURED OR DEAD SEA TURTLES IMMEDIATELY! IT IS ILLEGAL TO BURY OR DISPOSE OF A DEAD SEA TURTLE WITHOUT NOTIFYING THE FOLLOWING AUTHORITIES.**

Gumbo Limbo Nature Center	Main (561)-338-1473	Office (561)-338-1587	cell (561)-901-3953
FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Comm. (FWC)	(561)-575-5407		
FWC Law Enforcement	24 Hours (888)-404-3922		

## WHAT TO DO:

### If the turtle is ALIVE:

**CONTACT** one of the authorities listed above immediately, try Gumbo Limbo first, use the cell phone number! Have someone stay with the animal and protect it from the sun. Keep the animal cool with a damp towel or water and wait for a response to your call. Fresh or salt water can be used to cool the turtle without harm.

### If you have a LIVE SEA TURTLE HATCHLING (they fit in the palm of your hand):

**DO NOT** expose it to air conditioned areas.

**DO NOT** place the hatchling in salt water, fresh water is preferred, but only less than ¼ inch deep.

**DO** keep the hatchling in the shade, direct exposure to the sun may kill the animal.

If you are not sure what to do, place the hatchling on moist sand and cover with a cloth.

**CONTACT** one of the authorities listed above and wait for a response.

**IF POSSIBLE**, bring the turtle to the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, a hatchling drop-off box is available at the front entrance for after hours delivery.

### If the turtle is DEAD

**CONTACT** one of the authorities listed above and be prepared to report the exact address.

Unfortunately, dead hatchlings are not uncommon, and need not be reported unless more than five are found at one site.

### If you find exposed eggs on the beach

Empty shells- no action necessary.

Unhatched eggs exposed- Collect exposed eggs without rotating them. Contact Gumbo Limbo at one of the phone numbers listed above.

## REMEMBER

It is **ILLEGAL** to approach or harass nesting sea turtles. It is also **ILLEGAL** to remove stakes from an existing sea turtle nest or to dig into the sand at the site of a marked sea turtle nest. Please report any violation to Gumbo Limbo first, then call the other agencies listed above. Please reserve Gumbo Limbo cell phone use to sightings of injured or dead sea turtles or nest site violations.

Beach front lighting discourages sea turtle nesting and disorients hatchlings away from the ocean. Boca Raton's lighting ordinance requires that no lights be visible from the beach from May 1 to October 31. Please report any suspected beach front lighting violations to Gumbo Limbo at the phone numbers listed above. There should be no lights visible from the beach

For additional information about sea turtles and how you can help preserve these endangered animals, please visit or call the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N. Ocean Blvd., 561-338-1473. Educational programs about sea turtles are available year-round at Gumbo Limbo. Please call 561-338-1473 for more information.