girl scouts
of southeast florida

Girl Scouts Love Sea Turtles

PURPOSE

The purpose of this program is to educate Girl Scouts on sea turtles and their importance to our ocean's ecosystem as they discover the types of sea turtles, their habitats, and daily survival.

LEGACY

This badge is designed to specifically engage Girl Scouts in active awareness and purposeful actions within their own community to encourage conservation on many levels, increase awareness of the plight of sea turtle populations, and provide hope for their future.

GIRL SCOUT LEVELS / REQUIREMENTS

To earn the Sea Turtles patch, Girl Scouts need to complete a Take Action Project along with the following requirements. They are encouraged to complete at least one activity from each section: Discover and Connect.

- Daisy Girl Scouts: any 2 activities
- Brownie Girl Scouts: any 3 activities
- Junior Girl Scouts: any 4 activities
- Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador Girl Scouts: all 5 activities

Please review the [Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge for All Girl Scouts](#).

RESOURCES

Useful resources can be discovered online or by visiting your local county library. Some resources to get you started are below.
- [Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission – Sea Turtles](#)
- [Visit Florida – Where to See Nesting Sea Turtles in Florida](#)
- [Florida Museum – Florida Turtles](#)
- [See Turtles – Sea Turtle Facts](#)

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ACTIVITIES

DISCOVER

- ACTIVITY #1: Species
  Research all of the species of sea turtles and learn their behaviors, especially their migration habits. Which species of sea turtles nest in Florida? Learn if any are endangered and why?

- ACTIVITY #2: The Life of a Sea Turtle
  Find out how many eggs sea turtles lay and what she has to do to protect them against water, people and other things that might threaten their survival.
  - How long does it take for a baby to hatch? How does it return to the sea?
  - Find out what a carapace, plastron and scutes are to describe a sea turtle.

- ACTIVITY #3: Survival
  Discover three things that threaten sea turtles' survival. Learn ways you can help save the sea turtles from being extinct.

CONNECT

- ACTIVITY #4: Dig Deep and Discover Sea Turtles
  Select one species of sea turtles to learn their physical traits such as:
  - Shell measurements
  - Color and shape of beak
  - Unique identifying marks (For example the Leatherback turtle does not have any scutes on their back, just tough leathery skin.)
  Create your own sea turtle model using items such as plastic containers, boxes, construction paper, tissue paper, and/or papier-mâché.

- ACTIVITY #5: Hatching
  Learn the rules for beachgoers for about how best to enjoy the seashore without disturbing the turtle nests. Then, do one of the following:
  - Visit your local beach to locate a sea turtle's nest. Discover what it looks like and if others are staying away from them.
  - Visit your local turtle conservation park and discover the work of sea turtles.
  - Check the schedule for the "Night Hikes" to watch a sea turtle nest.

o View the video of sea turtles hatching and making their way back to the ocean on this webpage: http://www.fla-keys.com/turtlecam/

TAKE ACTION

Share what you've discovered while doing this program by completing a Take Action Project. Some suggestions are listed below:

- Become a Sea Turtle Advocate
  - o Volunteer with your local sea turtle organization to patrol beaches to look for turtle nests and remove trash, debris, and other things left on the beach.
  - o While out, with a trusted adult present, talk to others about what you are doing and why.

- Adopt a Sea Turtle's Nest
  - o As a volunteer with your local sea turtle organization, with permission, adopt a sea turtle's nest. Assist in the protection of the nest. Record your observations from the start, when the nest is discovered, to the finish, when the eggs hatch.
  - o With a trusted adult present, talk to people about why you are doing what you are doing, why it is important, and ask the official observers what the next step is after the hatchlings make it to the ocean. Where do they go, and what is the role of the observer?

- Make the Trip
  - o Some sea turtles travel hundreds of thousands of miles to get close to the beaches where they were hatched at. Get your troop involved in this activity, or your family, friends, and those in your neighborhood.
  - o Go online to https://conserveturtles.org/ and check out the path that different turtles take while migrating during nesting season.
  - o Pick one turtle and total up the miles they have traveled. Together as a group, decide what day you will start and make the trip!
  - o Collectively as a group, you will be walking, running, riding bikes, etc. to travel the distance a turtle travels to nest. You decide if you want to do it over one month, two months, or three months.

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- o Take pictures to document your journey and write a paragraph on your feelings about the process.

- Spread the Word
    - o Create a fact board on sea turtles to teach awareness to others on the different species of endangered sea turtles on our beaches. Include information that you have learned while completing this patch, along with as why sea turtles and their preservation are so important. Then, share in your class, with your troop, at church, a nature center, or other community location.

- Write Your Local City Representative
    - o With help from a trusted adult, write a letter to your local city offices. Explain why you think it is important to preserve the lives of sea turtles and to continue their protection. Ask your trusted adult to mail your letter.

- Participate in Monofilament Line Recycling
    - o Participate in monofilament fishing line recycling! Check out http://mrrp.myfwc.com/ through Florida Wildlife Commission and download the instructions to build your own monofilament recycling bin!

- Host a Beach Cleanup
    - o If you live near a beach, host a beach clean-up! If you don't live near a beach, go clean up a local park, or your neighborhood. Remember, everything you do can have a positive impact on sea turtles and the environment.

- Your Choice
    - o Any other activity that you can create that would raise sea turtle awareness in your community.