

SEA TURTLE REPORT

Sea Turtle Hatchlings

By Maria Lamb

The sea turtle season is into its third month and many eggs that were deposited by the female sea turtle have hatched or are approaching their “hatch date” (due

date). The Weekly Sea Turtle Activity Report has Marco with 17 hatched nests and one disorientation!
When do hatchlings emerge? According to FWC, “hatchlings ready to emerge wait just beneath the sand surface until



Photo by Maria Lamb

Daily monitoring by Marco’s Sea Turtle Monitor, J. Jewett (JJ), was performed above the high water line using an all-terrain vehicle (ATV). Here she is checking if the sea turtle nested or if it resulted in a false crawl.

conditions become cool. This temperature cue prompts them to emerge primarily at night, although some late-afternoon and early-morning emergences have been documented.
According to the Collier County Sea Turtle Annual Report, daily monitoring for hatched nests begins as the nest approaches its expected hatch date (approximately 60 days). Nests are observed for signs of hatchings, such as obvious depressions in the sand or hatchling tracks around the nest. Hatchlings that become disoriented by artificial light sources were tracked by staff, and these misdirected hatchlings were often found in nearby parking lots or pool areas, away from the water, or found dead from exhaustion or predated by nocturnal animals.
The average number of Loggerhead

sea turtle eggs per nest (clutch size) in Collier County is 110 to 120 eggs per nest.
Artificial light is harmful to hatchlings on nesting beaches. According to FWC, “disorientation from artificial light causes thousands of hatchlings’ deaths each year in Florida and is a significant marine turtle conservation problem.”
During July, per the MIPD website, the beach was patrolled and reports filed for July 1, 5, and July 8 (three nights) as of this report. Beach-facing condo residents have collected their own data for bright pedestrian lights for July 5, 7, 11, 12, 15, and 16. They took date/time stamped photos with pedestrian violations occurring between 9:00 - 10:00 PM.



Sea Turtle Activity July 13 - July 19, 2026

Beach	Nests		False Crawls		Hatched Nests		
	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	Disoriented
Barefoot	229	287	248	263	39	36	7
Delnor Wiggins	59	63	61	97	11	14	0
Vanderbilt	195	268	219	200	25	36	5
Parkshore	229	204	179	266	31	34	8
City of Naples	291	253	245	212	42	29	6
Keewaydin Is.	583	521	809	710	64	63	0
Sea Oat Island	36	18	34	23	2	0	0
Marco Island	161	111	245	303	17	5	1
Kice and Cape Romano	168	179	287	207	19	2	0
10,000 Islands	133	142	159	168	21	14	0
Collier County Totals	2084	2046	2486	2449	271	233	27

To report dead, injured or disoriented sea turtles on Marco call 239-289-9736 or 239-289-9687

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