

VELADOR

Protecting Sea Turtles and their Habitats since 1959

Issue 3, 2004

CCC Helps Monitor Nesting in Carr Refuge



Janet Hochella and Jim Stevenson volunteered this summer on behalf of the Caribbean Conservation Corporation (CCC) to monitor sea turtle nesting in the Sebastian Inlet State Park (SISP), which is located in the heart of the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge. As CCC volunteers, Jim and Janet had many unique experiences and encountered lots of turtles during their summer-long

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Janet Hochella



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from cover...

contribution to sea turtle survival.

The monitoring carried out by Jim and Janet represents CCC's first active participation in nest monitoring within the Archie Carr Refuge. Named after CCC's founding Scientific Director, the Carr

Refuge is made up of a patchwork of public and private coastal properties between Melbourne and Vero Beach on Florida's central Atlantic coast. The full twenty miles of beach between these north and south boundaries are considered part of the Refuge, regardless of which entity owned a particular stretch. While the CCC team helped monitor the area around Sebastian Inlet, researchers with the University of Central Florida and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service continued their long-term monitoring in the other sections of the Refuge.

Morning surveys began in the SISF on June 25th, 2004. Jim and Janet coordinated their efforts closely with Park Biologist Terry O'Toole, who conducted monitoring on any mornings that couldn't be covered by the CCC team. In addition to collecting important data, Jim and Janet truly enjoyed their time on the beach. They woke up each morning as early as 4:30 a.m. to begin their surveys on time. And although they had access to the Park's ATVs, they chose to walk most of the time, instead.

"Walking instead of using ATVs is great exercise and gives the added bonus of being able to stop and smell the roses," said Janet. "Beachcombing as we went, sea beans, exquisite shells, small toys and fishing lures were all great finds as we trekked the beach during our surveys."



Jim Stevenson and Janet Hochella pose on the Sebastian Inlet jetty -- their surveyed stretch of beach in the background.

During 49 survey days, the duo documented 272 turtle crawls, 70 of which resulted in confirmed loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) nests and 25 of which produced green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) nests. The remaining 177 crawls were "false crawls," where a female emerged from the sea but did not produce a nest of eggs.

"Some of the crawls were a real challenge to identify," admits Jim. "It looked so easy during the training workshop, but once on the soft sand and pitted areas, the crawls are not as easy to call."

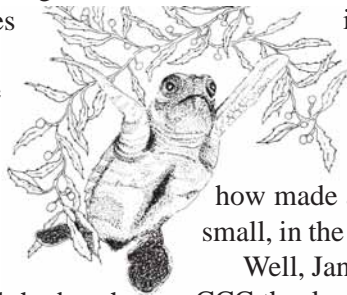
Toward the end of the summer, Janet and Jim began noticing the tracks of hatchlings leading from a nest down to the water's edge. Often they would witness a few hatchlings scurrying into the surf. On a few occasions, they documented hatchlings that had become disoriented--sometimes a track would abruptly stop at a crab hole.

Over the course of the summer, Janet and Jim walked 239.5 miles and logged 143 volunteer hours.

"It was worth every minute and every mile!," said Janet. "I think of other volunteers doing the same thing and cannot help but marvel at the

incredible amount of time and dedication that goes into conserving these special animals. Jim and I hope we have somehow made a difference, however small, in the survival of sea turtles."

Well, Janet and Jim, you have. CCC thanks you for your great effort on behalf of sea turtles.



VELADOR {bel.a.dor}

In Caribbean cultures, **Velador** translates as "one who stands vigil" — originally referring to turtle and egg harvesters who waited at night for turtles to come ashore. Now CCC claims this title for its newsletter, and around the Caribbean, CCC's researchers and volunteers are replacing poachers as the new veladors.

Velador is published for members and supporters of the nonprofit **Caribbean Conservation Corporation (CCC)** and its **Sea Turtle Survival League (STSL)** program.

CCC is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of sea turtles through research, training, advocacy, education and the protection of habitats.

STSL is the US-based public awareness, advocacy and education program of the CCC.

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Sea Turtle Grants Program

Website provides results from Sea Turtle License Plate funded projects

The Caribbean Conservation Corporation has begun its second year of administering the Florida Sea Turtle Grants Program, which is funded by revenues from Florida's Sea Turtle Specialty License Plate. All funding generated by the tag supports sea turtle protection. Seventy-percent goes to Florida's Marine Turtle Protection Program to support research and management activities. The remaining 30% is distributed by CCC through the Grants Program.

"Over 90% of all the sea turtle nesting in the continental United States takes place in Florida," said CCC Executive Director David Godfrey. "CCC established the turtle tag to provide a permanent funding source for turtle research and protection programs being conducted by State biologists and the many independent turtle protection groups working in Florida. By purchasing an official Sea Turtle Specialty License Plate, citizens can directly support sea turtle conservation."

Numerous groups and institutions around the state are working to protect the threatened and endangered sea turtle species found nesting on Florida beaches and swimming in Florida's coastal waters. Through the grants program, eight coastal governments, four research institutions and 27 non-profit groups have received funding to support their activities. Most recently, the Program awarded nearly \$200,000 in grants to support 16 projects

taking place this year.

As part of its efforts to promote the turtle tag and the grants program, CCC developed a website with a wealth of information about the turtle tag and all of the fantastic conservation and research programs it

supports. There is even a section showing final reports and photos from recently completed projects funded by the license plate.

"This is a great tool for promoting the purchase of the sea turtle license plate," said Dan Evans, Grants Program Administrator. "It also helps us explain where all the money goes by showing people the many projects funded by license plate grants."

The "Funded Projects" section of the website lists all projects receiving grant funds since the start of the program in 2001. The 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 funding cycles include information about each project, including project summaries and final reports.

The new website also includes updated license plate sales figures (new sales and renewals). While the Sea Turtle Plate still ranks 6th in annual sales among the 80-plus specialty plates available in Florida, the trend suggests that sales have been leveling out. Now is the time for CCC and others to promote new tag sales and renewals. For more information about the Sea Turtle Grants Program and funded projects, visit www.helpingseaturtles.org.

Editor's Note: If you don't live in Florida and are interested in getting a Sea Turtle Plate, you can purchase a mock version by contacting CCC at 800-678-7853 or www.ccturtle.org.

Focus on Turtle Heroes

A Teacher Goes the Distance

Teachers are some of the most important activists. As educators they plant the first seeds of sea turtle awareness for the next generation. Turtle Hero Kathy Woods is proving how quickly one bit of education leads to another. A teacher herself, Kathy started by giving presentations on sea turtles to her own classes. Then she told her fellow teachers about CCC and its online sea turtle tracking program and started contacting other local schools to give talks.

Kathy's experiences prove that there is no limit to the number of people you can recruit on behalf of sea turtles. "I'm offering to give presentations to anyone who either teaches or has a good relationship with their child's teacher or anyone who knows teachers. In fact, I even suggested that my hairdresser pass along my name to any of her teacher clients," she says. Her efforts have paid off: Kathy recruited at least 10 other teachers to adopt sea turtles from CCC, and they are using the online migration-tracking education program as an integral part of their curriculum. And the number keeps going up. Way to go Kathy! Thanks for all the hard work!

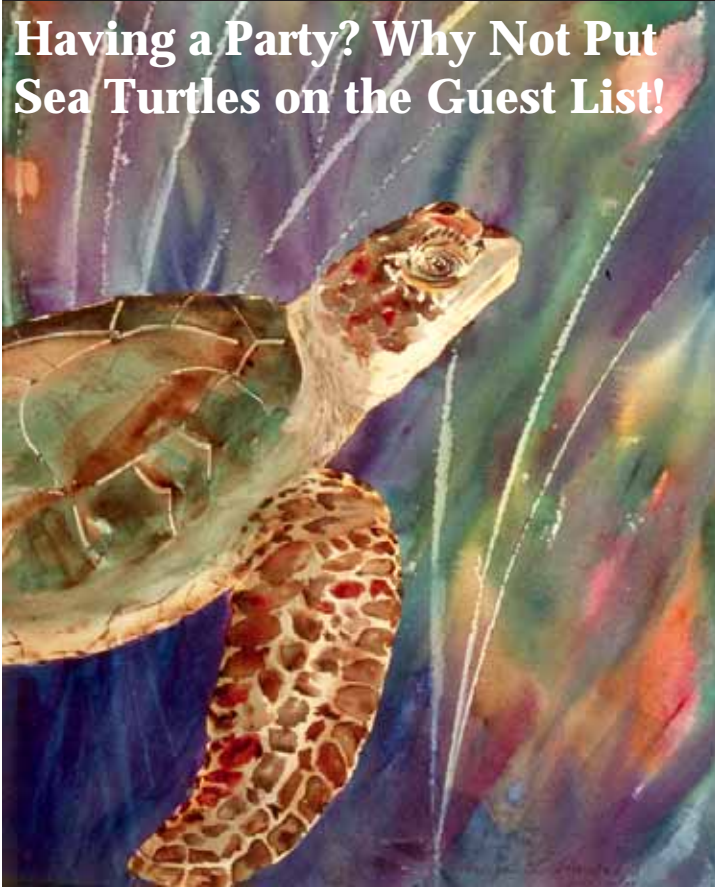
Creativity Helps Sea Turtles

Two Salt Lake City girls left Ringling Brothers in their dust when they sponsored a pet show to raise funds and awareness about sea turtles. Katie Johnston and Kate Coursey were the hit of their neighborhood with their pet show and live auction. Between auction items, sea turtle adoptions, and hand-made sea turtle jewelry they sold through their newly-formed company, Beadling Buddies, Katie & Kate sent CCC six new members and raised over \$500. They've even networked their efforts to California's sunny coasts by teaching their cousins how to make sea turtle items over the summer and promise profits from these future sales to CCC. Way to go Katie & Kate! On behalf of the sea turtles, thanks for all your hard work and ingenuity. You are an inspiration to us all!



CCC Special Events Program

Having a Party? Why Not Put Sea Turtles on the Guest List!



Everyone experiences moments in life that call for remembrance—a baby’s birth, a young child’s passage into adulthood, two people joining together in love, or even a parent’s passing. These are the sort of moments in life that define us and tell the world who we were, are, or hope to be. When your next major life event comes around, why not

showcase your compassion and dedication to sea turtles? By planning your birthdays, weddings, christenings and memorials with sea turtle themes, you can have both fun and ecologically conscious parties your guests are sure to remember for years to come.

CCC offers a variety of ways to put sea turtles at every table setting. You can purchase sea turtle items as gifts for your guests, or buy donation cards that also serve as place cards. The possibilities are only bounded by your imagination, so the sky’s the limit!

With each Special Events order, CCC provides informational brochures for your guests and a free sea turtle adoption with a year’s membership for the celebrant.

The response to the Special Events program has been unanimously enthusiastic. When Lisa & Marty Walker decided to get married, they wanted to share their love of sea turtles with their friends and family. They not only adopted sea turtles for their guests, but also purchased place cards and passed out CCC literature to their guests.

“I was very impressed with the special events services provided by the Caribbean Conservation Corporation,” said Dawn Lashbrooke, Lisa’s mother. “CCC was exceptionally helpful and carried out our requests very professionally. All the guests thought the turtle adoption certificates were a wonderful idea and several of the younger married guests said they wished they’d thought of it for their wedding day.”

And when longtime member Lisa Soo threw a sea turtle themed birthday party for her son, Michael, everyone loved the sea turtle models and adoption certificates she purchased for the children: “It was quite a hit!”

To learn more, give us a call at (800) 678-7853 or visit our website: www.cccturtle.org/specialevents. 

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