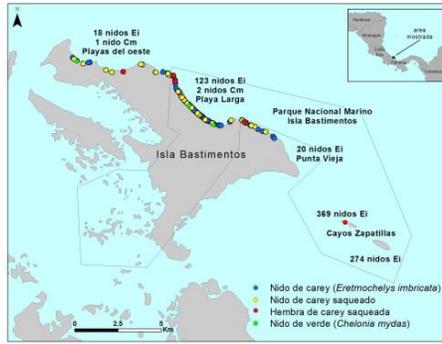


Sea Turtle Conservancy Programs: Research Assistantships Sea Turtle Monitoring in Bocas del Toro Province, Panama, Bastimentos Island National Marine Park



Research Assistantship (RA) positions are voluntary (unpaid) and selected RAs are expected to plan and finance their own travel to and from Bocas del Toro, Panama, and work on the project for at least two months. Good knowledge of Spanish and English is required. Selected RAs will receive room and board in small, very basic field camps and will be expected to help with cooking and clean-up. Applicants with: 1) education in biology or related fields, 2) previous fieldwork with sea turtles, and 3) experience working/living in multicultural environments in isolated locations for extended periods will be most competitive for these positions. Beach monitoring season runs May through October. Preference will be given to applicants who can be in Bocas on 27 April or who could remain in Bocas until 2 November.

Since 2003, we (Anne and Peter Meylan) have worked in partnership with the Sea Turtle Conservancy (STC) to monitor important Panamanian sea turtle nesting beaches in the Bocas del Toro Province and the Comarca Ngäbe Buglé, from the Changuinola River to the Chiriquí River. Key among these beaches are three in the Bastimentos Island National Marine Park: Small Zapatilla Cay, Big Zapatilla Cay and Playa Larga. For the 2019 nesting season, we anticipate having up to 6 openings for research assistants to help with this work.

Applications will be accepted until all positions are filled and must include the following materials:

1. Application Form (download from the STC website: <https://conserveturtles.org/assistantships-sea-turtle-monitoring-bocas-del-toro-region-panama/>);
2. A cover letter explaining why you are interested in the Research Assistant position, details of any relevant experiences, and a statement of your level of proficiency in English and Spanish (either a formal qualification or an indication of your written/oral comprehension).
3. A CV or resume with pertinent information; and
4. Name and email contact of two professional references.

Completed materials should be emailed to Peter Meylan (meylanpa@eckerd.edu), Anne Meylan (anne.meylan@myFWC.com), and Cristina Ordoñez at cristinao@conserveturtles.org.

Project description: Conservation and monitoring of nesting hawksbills and their nests.

Location: Bocas del Toro Province, Bastimentos Island National Marine Park (BINMP)

Dates: 27 April – 2 November 2019 (a minimum two month stay is required).

Project summary: Since 1979, Drs. Anne and Peter Meylan have been studying the sea turtles of Bocas del Toro region of Panama and promoting their conservation. Since 2003, we have worked in a partnership with the Sea Turtle Conservancy (STC) to monitor important nesting beaches in Bocas del Toro Province and the Comarca Ngäbe Buglé. Four sea turtle species are found in the waters of Bocas del Toro and the Comarca; Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*), Hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), Green (*Chelonia mydas*) and Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*). Within this region, we have standardized monitoring, research and protection efforts in collaboration with STC and members of local communities close to the nesting beaches. This program has had very positive results. In the last 15 years, there has been a reduction in the illegal killing of turtles on the majority of nesting beaches in the area, and an increasing nesting trend for hawksbill turtles. We now see hawksbill nesting activity nearly every night from mid-May to early October. Despite these advances, numerous threats remain for the sea turtles within and adjacent to BINMP, including increasing pressure on coastal and marine habitats through unregulated tourism development and the continued hunting of turtles for personal consumption and commercial purposes both on the beach and within park waters.

For additional information about the internship, go to:

<https://conserveturtles.org/assistantships-sea-turtle-monitoring-bocas-del-toro-region-panama/>

For additional information about the project, see

http://home.eckerd.edu/~meylanpa/E&E-BI111/Meylan_Web_Site/Panama_Page/Panama_Page_main.html