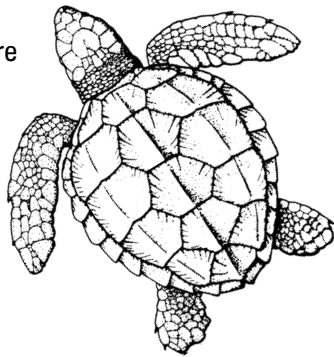


# Sea Turtles Nesting

Sea turtles are large marine reptilian swimmers of the sea that have been around for more than 60 million years. They use their streamlined body and long paddle-like flippers to migrate long distances from hundreds to thousands of miles. Five species of sea turtles are found in Florida waters. The Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) is the most common species and is classified as threatened. Green, Leatherback, Kemp's Ridley, and Hawksbill sea turtles are listed as endangered animals. Sea turtle season in Florida occurs April through September. It is believed that females return to nests on beaches where they were born. It takes about 50-55 days of incubation for about 100 eggs laid by the female. Once hatchlings emerge from their nests they swim towards the shore in masses. Sea turtles have been listed as endangered species for the past 50 years.



Artificial beach lighting, coastal development, marine debris, and fishing line entanglements are some of the reasons why these animals are becoming scarce.

Furthermore, pollution from oil spills and encounters with boat propellers have also caused death to sea turtles. To help save the turtles, remember these friendly sea turtle tips: Turn off your lights that shine on the beach, refrain from making noise when females are nesting, leave nests and hatchlings undisturbed, remove beach chairs and other personal items that may obstruct nesting sites, and put trash in proper receptacles.

