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Subject: Info for bulletin boards at ramps and soundside accesses
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Attachments: [Help protect turtles \(bulletin boards\).doc](#)

let me know what you think.

-Michelle

How you can help protect sea turtles

Waters off Cape Hatteras National Seashore are home to five of the seven sea turtles found in the world. All of these turtles are listed as threatened or endangered and there are penalties for harassing, harming, or killing these creatures.

You may be one of the lucky beachgoers that see a sea turtle nesting or emerging from a nest on the beach. May through October female turtles will crawl ashore at night, dig a hole in the sand, and lay their eggs. After laying around 120 eggs, the large turtle returns to the ocean. About 60 days later, the hatchlings (about 2-3 inches long) crawl out of the nest and begin their journey down the beach and into the ocean.

Here are some ways that you can help make 2008 a successful nesting season here at Cape Hatteras National Seashore:

- Minimize beach front lighting; close blinds and drapes at night in oceanfront rooms and turn off ocean facing patio/deck lights. Unnatural lights make it difficult for both nesting females and emerging hatchlings to navigate to and from the ocean.
- Please do not leave canopies, umbrellas, chairs, towels, etc. on the beach overnight.
- Fill in holes dug on the beach at the end of the day. This keeps nesting females and hatchlings from becoming stuck in holes, and also keeps our morning turtle patrollers safe.
- Keep beach fires small and at least 200 meters (the length of two football fields) from marked turtle nests.
- Do not take flash photography of a nesting turtle or emerging hatchlings.
- Turn off flashlights and other light sources if you see a turtle on the beach.
- Leave the tracks of turtles undisturbed.
- Most importantly, **DO NOT DISTURB ANY TURTLE OR THEIR NEST.**

What CAN you do if you see a turtle on the beach?

Make sure the animal you see is a sea turtle by observing its flippers. If the turtle is alive, immediately call Michelle, Park turtle biologist, at (252)216-6892. If the turtle is dead stranded and unmarked (no orange spray paint), you can call Michelle during working hours 6am - 3pm.

If you are fortunate enough to witness a nesting turtle, enjoy this wonder of nature from a distance. It is an event that few people witness and even fewer ever forget!