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**From:** [Cyndy Holda](#)  
**To:** [Mike Murray](#)  
**Subject:** Fw: It's not rocket science - Sea Turtle Hatchling Releases  
**Date:** 05/11/2010 11:40 AM

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Cyndy M. Holda  
Public Affairs Specialist  
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----- Forwarded by Cyndy Holda/CAHA/NPS on 05/11/2010 11:36 AM -----

**"Kim Mosher"**  
<[kmbythesea@charter.net](mailto:kmbythesea@charter.net)> To <[Cyndy\\_Holda@nps.gov](mailto:Cyndy_Holda@nps.gov)>  
cc  
05/11/2010 09:47 AM Subject Fw: It's not rocket science - Sea Turtle  
Hatchling Releases

You would think Cape Hatteras would want more turtles to get a chance on life. Not here. They just want to shut the beach down.

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [Lynne](#)  
**To:** [Kim Mosher](#)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 11, 2010 8:43 AM  
**Subject:** It's not rocket science - Sea Turtle Hatchling Releases

*(Our Park Service must be missing something!)*

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**Padre Island National Seashore**  
Sea Turtle Hatchling Releases



Photo by Julio Barrada

Visitors gather to watch hatchling sea turtles taking their first steps into the Gulf of Mexico.

### **Protection of Nests**

Eggs from most sea turtle nests found at Padre Island National Seashore and northward along the Texas coast are transported to the Padre Island National Seashore incubation facility for protected care and monitoring and the hatchlings are released at the northern end of Padre Island National Seashore. However, eggs from some of the nests found at the southern end of Padre Island National Seashore are incubated in a screen enclosure called a corral, located at the base camp near the National Seashore's 40 mile marker, and the resulting hatchlings are released there.

Eggs from nests found on South Padre Island and Boca Chica Beach are transported to a corral on South Padre Island and hatchlings emerging from those nests are released on South Padre Island.

Hatchlings from the incubation facility and corrals are released after they enter an active state called a frenzy which occurs about 1-3 days after the slow process of hatching is first detected. Hatchlings are guarded during release to ensure that they safely enter the surf.

A few nests are not found on the Texas coast at egg laying and thus incubate at the nest site (*in situ*). Since these nests are not protected, they typically have a lower survival rate than protected nests.

### **Public Hatchling Releases at Padre Island National Seashore**

Each year, the public is invited to attend 15-25 of the releases of

hatchlings that emerge from eggs cared for at the Padre Island National Seashore incubation facility. These releases are open to the public free-of-charge and are held at the northern end of the National Seashore, starting at about 6:30-6:45 am.

Hatchling releases are extremely popular with the public. Thousands of people attend each year. Local citizens attend in large numbers, as do visitors from out of town.

### **How to Attend a Hatchling Release**

Once nests are found, their estimated hatchling release dates are listed on this website. Hatchlings are typically released on one or two days within each of these estimated date ranges. Public releases are held when at least two nests are due to hatch and be released at the same time. This ensures that if one or more nest has a poor hatch or hatchlings enter their very active state called a frenzy when they must be released immediately, that there will still be at least one other nest available for the public release. People traveling from out of town to attend a release should target dates when several clutches are due to be released, and arrive at the beginning of the estimated date range, just in case all eggs hatch early within that date range. As the potential release date that you are interested in nears, call the recorded Hatchling Hotline at (361) 949-7163 for the latest information on the upcoming release.

During 2009, hatchling releases were conducted between early-June and late-August. Twenty-three public hatchling releases were held and over 4,000 people have attended. Hatchling releases will resume in late-May or early-June 2010, depending upon when the first nests of the year are found. Projected hatchling release dates will be posed here when nests are brought to the National Seashore incubation facility for care. As those projected release dates near, call the recorded Hatchling Hotline at (361) 949-7163 for the latest information.

### **Hatchling Release Etiquette**

To help ensure safe passage of the hatchlings down the beach and into the surf, white clothing, flash photography, smoking, eating,

and entering the water with the hatchlings are prohibited at the releases.

**Projected Release Dates for Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle Nests Held in the Incubation Facility at Padre Island National Seashore**

Nest number(s)	Projected release sometime between:
3, 6	June 14-20
15, 18, 19	June 21-27
21, 22	June 22-28