

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Marine Turtle Protection Program has two components:

The FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) coordinates collection of nesting and stranding data, facilitates rescue and rehabilitation, and conducts research on sea turtle behavior, migrations, ecology and threats. For more information, please call (727) 896-8626 or visit the FWRI Web site at <http://research.myfwc.com/>

The FWC Imperiled Species Management Section (ISM) coordinates the Commission's management activities to ensure protection of sea turtles. The activities include reviewing and conditioning construction permits to minimize impacts to sea turtles and reviewing and permitting research, rescue and nesting surveys for sea turtles. Section staff also coordinates efforts between local government or non-profit organizations and citizens for marine turtle protection. Contact staff at (850) 922-4330 or visit the ISM sea turtle Web site at MyFWC.com.



Photo Barbara B. James

Common obstacles sea turtles encounter when attempting to nest on Florida's beaches.

Sea turtle protection

The federal Endangered Species Act lists all five species of sea turtles in Florida as either threatened or endangered. In addition, sea turtles are protected by Florida Statute 370.12, the Marine Turtle Protection Act. Anyone found harassing a sea turtle or interfering with the nesting process faces criminal and civil penalties.

Call the FWC Wildlife Alert number 1-888-404-FWCC to report:

- Stranded hatchlings
- Harassment of sea turtles
- Disturbance of nests
- Dead or injured sea turtles or hatchlings
- Entangled sea turtles
- Sea turtles caught with fishing gear

Purchase a specialty "Helping Sea Turtles Survive" license plate from your tax collector's office when you register your vehicle or vessel. Proceeds directly benefit sea turtle research and conservation. License plates also are available online at buyaplate.com



I'm helping sea turtles survive.



helpingseaturtles.org



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

MyFWC.com

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Florida sea turtles Share the beach



Photo Barbara B. James

Beach Furniture and Sea Turtles



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To Reduce Impacts To Sea Turtles From Beach Furniture:

- **Remove furniture from the beach nightly**

At night, furniture should be completely removed from the beach and stored behind the primary dune. Please remember, **heavy equipment is not allowed on the beach during nesting season.** When possible, all furniture should be moved by hand.

- **Stack and arrange furniture**

Marine turtles prefer to nest on the mid to upper beach, protecting their nest from the high tide. Furniture that is left on the beach at night can prevent nesting turtles from reaching the upper beach (See Figure 1). If furniture can not be removed at night, it should be stacked to minimize interference with nesting or hatchling sea turtles (See Figure 2).

Arrange the stacked furniture with the shortest edge facing the shoreline.

Figure 1

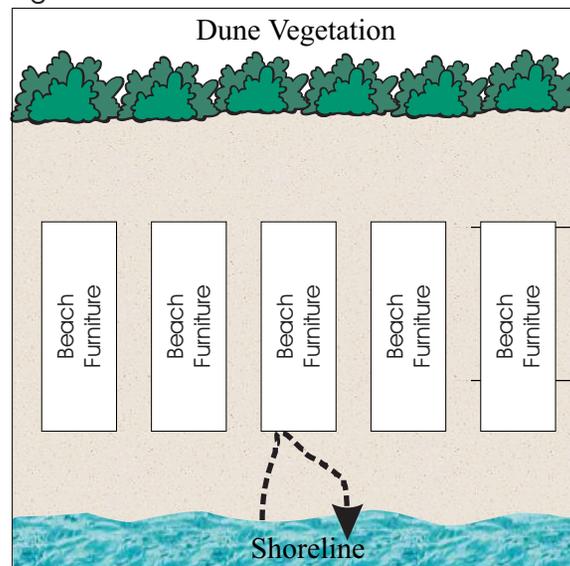
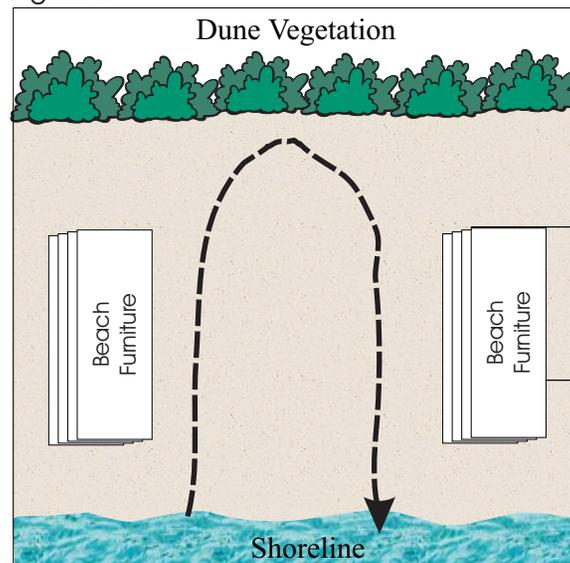


Figure 2



- **Place furniture properly**

No furniture should be placed on the beach until a nesting survey has been completed by a Marine Turtle Permit Holder, who will identify and mark nests. Place furniture **at least 5 feet from any marked nest.**

Furniture should not be placed on salt-resistant vegetation or on the dunes.

- **Use an umbrella holder or sleeve**

To the degree possible, avoid burying umbrella poles during sea turtle nesting season. Either anchor an umbrella holder or sleeve before the nesting season to use throughout the summer, or use umbrellas that clamp directly to the furniture.

If you see someone disturbing a sea turtle nest or see a dead, injured or harassed sea turtle, please call the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at 1-888-404-FWCC.