

Turtle Watch Patch Program



INTRODUCTION:

There are seven kinds of sea turtles recognized around the world. Three of these, the loggerhead, green, and leatherback, are prevalent in the coastal waters of Florida. These magnificent animals are now on the endangered species list and much is being done to protect and preserve them. Most coastal communities have active turtle watch programs to aid in the process.

This program is designed for Girl Scout Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors and can serve to increase your understanding, respect, and appreciation of sea turtles and other marine life and inform you of what you can do to help in their preservation.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

In completing this program, girls will:

- ✦ Gain knowledge about sea turtles and the importance of them in our ecosystem.

TO ORDER THE PATCH:

Girls must complete eight requirements to earn the patch; this patch can only be earned once.

DISCOVER:

- ✦ Find out the following about the sea turtle:
 - The different species.
 - Where they live.
 - What they eat.
 - Where they migrate.
 - Nesting – where, how, gestation period, hatchlings.
- ✦ Research what “endangered” means and what is being done to protect sea turtles, including the TED (Turtle Excluder Device) rules.
- ✦ Draw a map showing where you live and the closest beach. Include what kinds of turtles live there. Contact the local turtle watch for information on what they are doing to protect sea turtles.
- ✦ Watch a sea turtle video. Draw a poster that illustrates something you learned about sea turtles.
- ✦ Find out about laws in your community and state that protect sea turtles.

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CONNECT:

- ✦ Visit a local beach during turtle nesting season.
- ✦ Contact the turtle watch program in that area to see the marked nests and observe a nest excavation after it has hatched.
- ✦ Visit a local aquarium or museum to see and learn about sea turtles.
- ✦ Research careers relating to marine life. Invite a person to talk to your troop about his/her career.
- ✦ Research sea turtle-related websites:
 - Caribbean Conservation Corporation:
www.cccturtle.org (tracking program) or www.helpingseaturtles.org
 - Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Florida Marine Research Institute:
www.floridamarine.org (look under Marine Biology section header)
 - United States Fish and Wildlife Service:
www.fws.gov (look under “endangered species” and “sea turtle”)
- ✦ Read one of the following books and give an oral report to your troop:
 1. *Sea Turtles* by Gail Gibbons
 2. *Sea Turtles* by Lorraine Jay
 3. *The View From Saturday* by E.L. Konigsburg

TAKE ACTION:

- ✦ Develop a poster contest about sea turtles.
- ✦ Send the winning posters to your local turtle watch organization.

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