



## Help MacArthur Beach State Park

### Volunteers needed to assist in Sea Turtle Nesting Surveys

MacArthur Beach State Park participates in the **statewide sea turtle nesting survey program** and seeks to increase the Park's capacity to collect data by using trained volunteers in a program called Citizen Science. Citizen Science is a form of participatory scientific research in which the public volunteers their time to assist scientists by collecting meaningful, useful data, providing the opportunity for you to contribute to sea turtle conservation.

This is a great opportunity to really get your hands dirty and provide much needed help! MBSP is home to a large number of sea turtle nests and the Park staff can use your assistance in collecting data. The program also assists the park in monitoring its sea turtle population and assists biologists and scientists in accumulating the data for our state which in turn feeds into global databases.

When we say that you will get your hands dirty, we mean it! Your job in this program will be to excavate the nests after the turtles have hatched and assess nest productivity. On the beach in the wee hours of the morning digging in the sand with almost no one else around ... who could ask for more! Volunteers will participate in the park's standard training for volunteers as well as specific training for nest excavation.

For (almost) all ages; children 8 years and older may participate with parent or guardian in attendance.

Last year the first loggerhead sea turtle nests of the season were spotted in late April were ready for excavation in late June or July. The nest excavation is rewarding, fulfilling, dirty, stinky work conducted with some great folks who deeply care about the Park and the sea turtles. We need you....how about it?

**Training will be held on May 30 from 9 to 11 a.m.**

**Register for the Citizen Science Training - Space is Limited**

- Send an email to: [turtles@macarturbeach.org](mailto:turtles@macarturbeach.org)
- In the Subject: Citizen Science Training
- In the Body: Name, email address and phone number

## **Sea Turtle Nest Excavation Citizen Science Project** **Volunteer Position Description**

### **Program Description**

The Statewide Nesting Beach Survey (SNBS) program was initiated in 1979 under a cooperative agreement between the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Its purpose is to document the total distribution, seasonality and abundance of sea turtle nesting in Florida. Three species of sea turtles, the loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), and the leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*), nest regularly on Florida's beaches. Two other species, the hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) and Kemp's ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*), nest infrequently. All five species are listed as either threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act.

MacArthur Beach State Park participates in the SNBS program seeks to increase the Park's capacity to collect data by using trained volunteers in a program called Citizen Science. Citizen science is a form of participatory scientific research in which the public volunteers their time to assist scientists by collecting meaningful, useful data.

### **Principle Purpose of Position**

Volunteers will excavate sea turtle nests to determine nest productivity. Excavation includes digging up the nest after the turtle eggs have hatched and conducting an inventory of hatched/unhatched eggs as well as evidence of hatchling mortality.

### **Summary of Essential Position Functions**

- Complete standard volunteer training for MBSP
- Complete training specific to sea turtle excavation
- Excavation of sea turtle nests. Requires 3-4 hours for each excavation. Excavations are conducted during the months of May-August. Each excavation takes 3-4 hours.  
Excavations are conducted in the early morning hours preferably beginning at dawn.
- Complete data survey sheets for each excavation
- Submit data sheets to project coordinator

### **Qualifications**

Interest in sea turtle conservation

Physical ability to perform key position functions

Ability to work independently

Must be detail oriented and have ability and desire to do repetitive tasks.

Must have ability to record and compile data

### **Position Functions**

Ability to dig to a depth of 5-6 feet in the sand with your hands

Ability to tolerate hot, stinky, sandy and wet conditions

**Sea Turtle Nest Excavation Citizen Science Project**  
**◀ Education Statement ▶**

Volunteers participating in the sea turtle nest excavation citizen science project will gain knowledge and understanding of:

- the importance of MBSP to nesting sea turtles
- the species of sea turtles nesting at MBSP
- the importance of data collection to understanding population, seasonal productivity, and distribution of sea turtles
- where to find data on MBSP sea turtle populations, seasonal productivity and the results of nest excavation data collection
- threats to sea turtles
- conservation practices to protect sea turtles

**Sea Turtle Nest Excavation Citizen Science Project**  
**◀ Volunteer's Checklist of Supplies ▶**

Hat

Sunscreen

Wear clothes that can get dirty, stinky and wet

Wear close-toed shoes that can get dirty, stinky and wet

Bottled water

Snacks

Note: MBSP will provide the supplies specific to the task of excavating the turtle