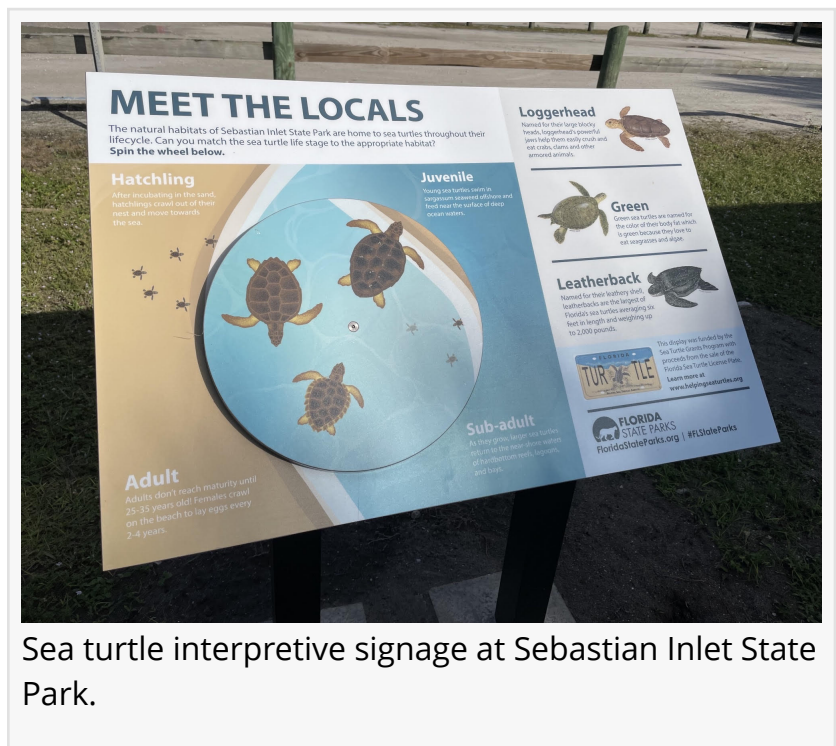


# Florida State Parks Foundation celebrates turtle nesting season with lighting and signage at Sebastian Inlet State Park

*Sea turtle-friendly amenities enhance crucial nesting site on Florida's Atlantic coast.*

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, March 14, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In celebration of sea turtle nesting season, which runs annually from March through October, the Florida State Parks Foundation today announced the completion of two projects at Sebastian Inlet State Park in Melbourne Beach which will create friendlier environments for sea turtles and enhance efforts to educate visitors about these majestic creatures.



Sea turtle interpretive signage at Sebastian Inlet State Park.

These projects, secured through a \$24,475 grant from the Sea Turtle Conservancy's Sea Turtle Grants Program, include:

- The purchase and installation of turtle-friendly external lighting for use on park property. Conventional external lighting can disorient both sea turtles coming ashore to nest and hatchlings making their way back into the ocean.
- New interpretive signage educating visitors about sea turtles and what can be done to support and protect them.

"The sea turtle is among the most iconic examples of Florida's marine wildlife, and Florida's state parks play a major role in their protection and preservation," said Tammy Gustafson, president of the Florida State Parks Foundation. "This generous grant will help Sebastian Inlet State Park be as turtle friendly as possible, and it also helps help further our mission to educate the public about Florida State Parks and the amazing natural resources found within them."

Sebastian Inlet State Park, which runs parallel with a barrier island and spans 972 acres, is a critical haven for nesting sea turtles, especially loggerhead sea turtles. The park hosts approximately 1,000 nests along its three miles of beaches each year. Sebastian Inlet is one of 13 state parks in Florida to participate in the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Index Nesting Beach Survey, a 34-year study to measure trends in sea turtle nesting in Florida.

"With about 1,000 nests each year, the beach at Sebastian Inlet State Park provides a safe, natural space for nesting sea turtles," said Chuck Hatcher, director of Florida State Parks. "We are thankful for partners like the Foundation and the Sea Turtle Grants Program for assisting in our efforts."



Sea turtle interpretive signage at Sebastian Inlet State Park.

“

The sea turtle is among the most iconic examples of Florida's marine wildlife, and Florida's state parks play a major role in their protection and preservation."

*Tammy Gustafson, Florida  
State Parks Foundation  
President*

The Foundation previously partnered with the Sea Turtle Grants Program and the Batchelor Foundation to renovate the outdoor sea turtle tank at John D. MacArthur Beach State Park in North Palm Beach. The tank serves as a home for the park's ambassador sea turtles. MacArthur Beach State Park holds a Marine Turtle Permit from FWC and is the only state park permitted to keep up to three juvenile loggerhead sea turtles for educational purposes.

Additionally, the Foundation also secured a grant from the Sea Turtle Grants Program to purchase nine Trimble GPS devices to aid in sea turtle nesting data collection at appropriate parks around the state.

"Sea turtles are some of Florida's most beloved wildlife, and the Foundation is constantly seeking ways to support our state parks' efforts to support and protect them," said Julia Gill Woodward, CEO of the Florida State Parks Foundation. "Thanks to the Sea Turtle Grants Program, we are excited to now have new, turtle-friendly amenities at one of Florida's most important state parks for nesting sea turtles."

These projects were funded by grants awarded from the Sea Turtle Grants Program. The Sea

Turtle Grants Program is funded from proceeds from the sale of the Florida Sea Turtle License Plate. Learn more at [www.helpingseaturtles.org](http://www.helpingseaturtles.org).

###

The Florida State Parks Foundation, founded in 1993 as Friends of Florida State Parks and renamed in 2018, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation whose mission is to support and help sustain the Florida Park Service, its 175 award-winning parks and trails, local Friends groups and more than 20,000 park volunteers.



Sea turtle-friendly lighting at Sebastian Inlet State Park.

It does this through programs that preserve and protect state parks, educate visitors about the value of state parks, encourage community engagement and active use of state parks, and advocacy. This project is being completed through the Florida State Parks Foundation Services LLC, which is a limited liability company affiliate of the Foundation.

The volunteer Board of Directors represents private and public sectors as well as local and statewide interests.

Tim Linafelt  
Florida State Parks Foundation  
+1 850-559-8914  
[tim@floridastateparksfoundation.org](mailto:tim@floridastateparksfoundation.org)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/621966701>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.