

World Turtle Day – Sea Turtle Hospital

Join the South Carolina Aquarium as we tour the Zucker Family Sea Turtle Recovery center. What began as a baby pool in the basement to help one turtle has become a state of the art facility that has provided care for sick and injured sea turtles since 2000. The South Carolina Aquarium has now released over 300 healthy turtles back into the ocean. These endangered animals needed help from our biologists and veterinarians, but they need help from you too! Learn how you can help sea turtles during this Virtual Field Trip.

Key Terms:

- Endangered – this means that there are not very animals of this species left; they are at risk of going extinct. All species of sea turtles are either threatened or endangered.
- Stranded – When a sea turtle is sick or injured, they often end up on the beach. We call this stranded.
- Scute – each section on a sea turtle’s shell
- Carapace – top of the sea turtle shell
- Plastron – bottom of the sea turtle shell
- Epibiota – small organisms growing on a sea turtle shell such as barnacles
- Life cycle – Sea Turtles go through a life cycle of egg>hatchling>juvenile>sub adult>adult
- Department of Natural Resources – This government agency is in charge of many things, including the protection of wild animals. Call DNR if you ever find a stranded sea turtle!

Discussion Questions:

1. What predators do you think might be a threat to sea turtles? How are they different at different life stages?
2. How could rising temperatures due to climate change have an impact on sea turtles? (Think: Migration, Feeding, Incubation, Development)
3. What are the four different types of Sea Turtles that live off the coast of South Carolina?

Activity:

Become a *Citizen Scientist*! Join or organize a litter sweep with your class, friends, or family! No matter where you live, plastic can be carried throughout our waterways and end up in our ocean. Plastic can also collect and pollute our communities as well as natural habitats. You can help save wildlife by removing litter from your community and contributing your data to the [Litter-free Digital Journal](#), a project of the South Carolina Aquarium Citizen Science app. The app is available for free download from the App Store or Google Play.