

3 Southern Beaches Where You Can Help Sea Turtles Hatch

Find out where you can go to cross this incredible experience off your bucket list.

By [Meghan Overdeep](#) | May 20, 2019



PHOTO: DAN GAIR/GETTY IMAGES

There are few things more beautiful—or dramatic—as a sea turtle hatching. Each year, thousands of mama turtles return to the beaches where they were born to lay their own eggs. After digging a hole in the sand, they lay between 50 and 200 eggs in it, cover it up and return to the ocean.

When the eggs hatch after about 60 days, the tiny baby turtles must dig out of the hole together. It's a laborious process that can take days, but their struggle really begins when they reach the surface. Predators lay in wait to intercept the hatchlings as they make their sprint to the sea. Not surprisingly, only a small percentage survive to adulthood.

That's where humans come in.

"Sea turtles are some of the most resilient creatures on Earth; however, that resiliency can only last for so long," Dr. Justin Perrault, director of research at Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center in Juno Beach, Florida, told USA Today's 10Best. "Therefore, it is extremely important to do everything we can to protect and preserve these species both on nesting beaches and in their foraging habitats to ensure their survival."

At a handful of spots in the South, humans have the opportunity not only to bear witness to this incredible process, but to take part in it, guaranteeing the hatchlings safe passage. Throughout the summer nesting season, these three spots in Florida and Georgia offer a variety of public programs with beach tours, classes, and even opportunities to help the turtles hatch.

B Ocean Resort, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

This beachfront property partners with the [Broward County Sea Turtle Conservation Program](#). From March through October, which is turtle nesting season in Greater Fort Lauderdale, guests at [B Ocean Resort](#) can participate in eco tours, turtle treks, and hatchling release.

Jekyll Island, Georgia

[The Jekyll Island Authority](#) has a variety of opportunities to get a closer look at turtle nesting, either during an evening or sunrise turtle walk. You can also become a sea turtle biologist for one night or one morning, and patrol Jekyll Island's beaches in search of nesting loggerhead sea turtles.

Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center, Juno Beach, Florida

[Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center](#), which boasts one of Florida's longest-running sea turtle monitoring programs, has a variety of public programs during the nesting season including evening turtle walks, sunrise nest excavations, hatchling releases, and hatchling feedings.