



"Sea turtles, which are among the oldest creatures on earth, have remained essentially unchanged for 110 million years; however, they face an uncertain future ."

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Credit: EARTHJUSTICE

World Sea Turtle Day

ARE SEA TURTLES ENDANGERED?

- All species of sea turtle found in the U.S. are protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) due to their populations being at risk of extinction.
- Over the last 30 years, the population of Eastern Pacific Leatherback Sea Turtles has declined by **90%**.
- Only 1 in 1,000 sea turtle hatchlings will make it to adulthood.

MAJOR THREATS TO SEA TURTLES AROUND THE WORLD

- Over **8,000,000** sea turtles around the world have been lost in the last 20 years due to incidental bycatch (B.P. Wallace *et al*).
- Thousands of sea turtles and other marine animals die each year due to pollution and plastic ingestion.
- The illegal trafficking of sea turtle flesh, eggs, and shells result in countless turtle deaths each year.
- Sea turtles are extremely sensitive to changes in water temperature, which may be exacerbated by climate change.

WAYS WE CAN HELP

- Avoid polluting our waters with waste--especially plastic that may be accidentally ingested by marine life.
- Purchase seafood that has low rates of incidental bycatch, avoid buying souvenirs that include turtle shells, and support local economies when traveling to visit sea turtles.
- Reduce the amount of artificial light that is visible from sea turtle nesting spots, as bright lights can disorient sea turtle hatchlings.
- Tell President Trump to finalize the rule to require all shrimp trawls to use Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs).

DID YOU KNOW?

Leatherback sea turtles can travel up to **10,000** miles per year.

That's more miles than teens between the ages of 16-19 drive each year!

Protect the Endangered Species Act!

President Trump and Republicans in Congress want to roll back protections for our most vulnerable creatures by attempting to strip protections offered by the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Since the start of the 115th Congress, 75 bills aimed at undercutting or underfunding the ESA have been introduced (Center for Biological Diversity). Recent attacks on the ESA include legislation that would allow the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to deny protections to endangered or threatened species based on economic considerations rather than scientific findings as well as numerous "riders" targeting the sage grouse, gray wolves, and the lesser prairie chicken. The Trump administration's proposed wall along the southwest border would destroy several habitats and endanger many species that are already threatened or otherwise vulnerable.