

Sea Turtle Specialty License Plate

The Sea Turtle License Plate was first offered for sale in February 1998 and quickly became one of the most popular specialty plates in Florida, raising over \$1 million annually. At just \$23.00 per tag, the turtle plate is also one of the least expensive specialty plates in Florida.

Approximately 70% of the funding generated by sales of the tag goes to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWCC) Marine Turtle Protection Program to support research and management activities related to sea turtles. Approximately 30% is distributed to the Sea Turtle Grants Program to support sea turtle research, conservation, and education projects that benefit Florida sea turtles. The Sea Turtle Grants Program is administered by the non-profit Caribbean Conservation Corporation.

Florida Marine Turtle Program

The Marine Turtle Protection Program includes staff in the Habitat and Species Conservation Program (HSC) and the Florida Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI). HSC marine turtle staff integrate scientific data with applied habitat management for the purpose of increasing wildlife populations. HSC staff are responsible for implementation and evaluation of marine turtle recovery and management plans, including development of proposed rules and regulations to safeguard critical habitats or to reduce adverse population impacts. FWRI marine turtle staff conduct research on the distribution, abundance, life histories, ecology, migrations, and threats to marine turtles in Florida and contiguous western Atlantic and Caribbean waters. FWRI staff also coordinate the Florida Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network, which is responsible for gathering data on dead or stranded sea turtles and the nesting beach survey programs around the state.

Sea Turtle Grants Program

Funded by a portion of revenues from Florida's Sea Turtle Specialty License Plate, the Sea Turtle Grants Program distributes funds each year to support sea turtle research, conservation and education programs throughout Florida.



In 1995, a statewide effort was initiated by the non-profit Caribbean Conservation Corporation (CCC) to establish a Florida Sea Turtle Specialty License Plate to provide a permanent funding source for the state's Marine Turtle Protection Program. Thanks to the efforts of CCC and other Florida sea turtle groups, in 1997, the Florida Legislature (Statute 320.08058 (19)) authorized the creation of a Sea Turtle Specialty License Plate to promote the conservation and protection of Florida's sea turtles.

The Sea Turtle Grants Program awarded over \$250,000 in 2005, over \$270,000 in 2006, and nearly \$265,000 in 2007.

Make a Difference

Florida is an important place for the endangered and threatened sea turtles of the world. Sea turtles nest on our beaches, forage for food in our estuaries, and all too often wash-up dead on our shoreline. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission staff are dedicated to protecting sea turtles in Florida and learning as much as possible about the biology and life history of these elusive animals.

If you are getting a new license plate, select the attractive sea turtle plate featuring a loggerhead hatchling crawling towards the surf.

If it is time to renew, make the switch to a sea turtle plate for your vehicle. If you already have a sea turtle license plate, you can renew it online at <http://express.hsmv.state.fl.us/>.

When you place a Sea Turtle License Plate on your car, you'll be doing your part to ensure the survival of these magnificent animals.

To learn more about the Sea Turtle License Plate and the Sea Turtle Grants Program, visit

www.helpingseaturtles.org

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