



## Sea Turtle Information

### Loggerhead

**Scientific name:** (*Caretta caretta*) Commonly called the loggerhead, it derives its name from the size of its head.

**Appearance:** Adults and subadults have a reddish-brown carapace (upper shell) and a dull brown to yellowish plastron (lower shell).

**Size:** Most adults weigh between 250 and 350 pounds and have a carapace between 3 and 4 feet long.

**Reproduction:** Loggerheads return to their nesting beach at intervals of 2, 3 or more years during the nesting season, which runs from May through September. They lay 4 to 7 nests per season. The average number of eggs is usually between 100 to 126. Eggs incubate for about 60 days.

### Green Turtle

**Scientific name:** (*Chelonia mydas*) Commonly called the green turtle, the name is derived from the green color of the fat that lies just under the upper and lower shell.

**Appearance:** A single pair of scales on the front of its head distinguishes the green turtle.

**Size:** Adults weigh between 225 and 350 pounds and measure between 3 and 4 feet.

**Reproduction:** Green turtles return to their nesting beach in intervals of 2, 3 or more years. They lay an average of 3 to 5 egg clutches during the nesting season, which runs from June through September, but a female may lay as many as 10 clutches. Greens lay about 115 eggs per clutch, which incubate in about 60 days.

### Leatherback Turtle

**Scientific name:** (*Dermochelys coriacea*) Commonly called the leatherback, its name because its shell is made of thin, tough, rubbery skin that looks like leather.

**Appearance:** the only sea turtle without a hard shell, its size and the ridges down its shell distinguish the leatherback.

**Size:** Adults can weigh between 500 and 1,300 pounds and measure between 4 and 8 feet in length!

**Reproduction:** Leatherbacks return to their nesting beach every 2 to 3 years. They lay an average of 6 to 9 egg clutches during the nesting season, which runs from March through May. Leatherbacks lay about 80 eggs per clutch, which incubate in about 65 days.

## NESTS

An introduction to a Sea Turtle Friendly Certification Program to recognize Neighbors Ensuring Sea Turtle Survival



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## Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge

Information about the National Wildlife Refuge for Sea Turtles in Your Backyard.

NESTS: A Sea Turtle Friendly Certification Program to recognize Neighbors Ensuring Sea Turtle Survival.

For more information call (800) 678-7853 or visit [www.nests-certified.org](http://www.nests-certified.org)

## What Is NESTS?

The NESTS, Neighbors Ensuring Sea Turtle Survival, certification program was developed by a group of organizations, companies and agencies to help increase community involvement in protecting vitally important sea turtle nesting beaches and nearshore sea turtle habitat. Through participation in NESTS, homeowner associations and private homeowners can work to ensure sea turtle survival in their neighborhood.

### How Does NESTS Work?

The NESTS program has three levels; Partner, Guardian and Champion. To become certified at each level involves completion of a series of activities around your homeowners association or around your house that will help sea turtles and their habitats.

Once you achieve each level, you will receive recognition awards that you can proudly display to show your commitment to ensuring sea turtles survive!

### How Do I Get Involved?

The life of a sea turtle can be rather challenging and we hope that you can help keep the neighborhood safe for turtles and insure that they are off to a good start!

For more information or to learn how you can register and get started on your way to becoming a NESTS Partner, call 1-800-678-7853 or visit [www.nests-certified.org](http://www.nests-certified.org).

## What Is the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge?

A 20.5-mile stretch of beach between Melbourne and Wabasso, along Florida's east

central coast, *attracts more nesting, threatened loggerhead sea turtles than virtually anyplace else on Earth.* These Brevard and Indian River County beaches also attract more nesting green turtles, an endangered species, than anyplace in the continental U.S. Even the endangered, mammoth leatherback turtle occasionally climbs up on these beaches to deposit its eggs in the sand.

To help preserve this globally important sea turtle nesting ground, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is creating a new national wildlife refuge in the remaining undeveloped lands between Melbourne Beach and Wabasso. The State of Florida, Brevard and Indian River Counties, the private Mellon Foundation and the USFWS, are each contributing money in the effort to buy land from willing sellers within the proposed refuge boundary.

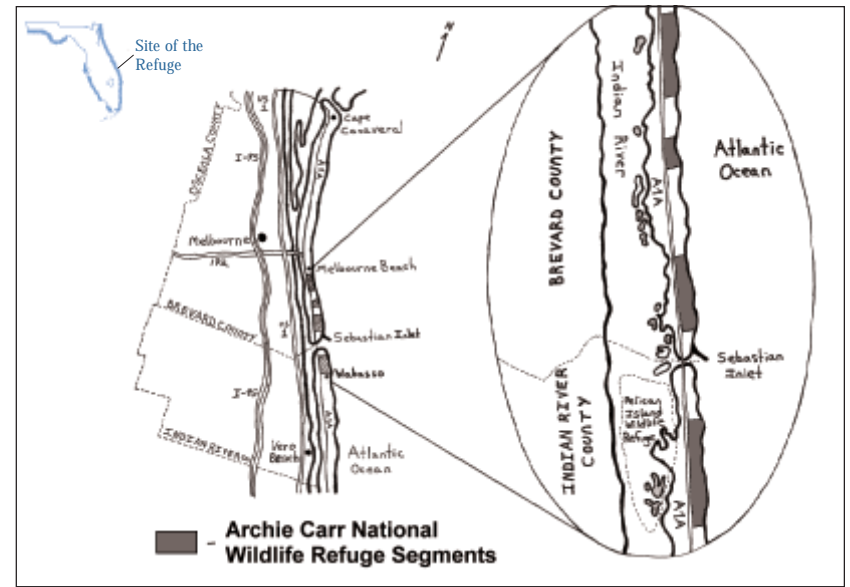
### How Was the Refuge Named?



Dr. Archie Carr, Jr.

The refuge was designated by Congress in 1989 and named after world-renowned ecologist Dr. Archie Carr, Jr. in honor of his contributions to the understanding and conservation of sea turtles.

Dr. Carr, a zoology professor at the University of Florida, brought the first international attention to the plight of sea turtles.



The Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge consists of four core segments along 20.5 miles of beach between Melbourne and Wabasso on Florida's east central coast.

### How Important Is the Refuge to Sea Turtles and Other Coastal Wildlife?

During the 2003 nesting season, which runs from March to October, over 12,598 loggerhead nests were counted in the refuge. The current record nesting season was in 1998 with over 21,540 loggerhead nests. Nesting like this makes the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge the most productive nesting site for loggerheads in the Western Hemisphere. 2003 was an expected low year for green sea turtles, with 669 nests in the refuge. The current record nesting season was in 2002, when 2,970 green turtle nests were counted in the refuge. For leatherbacks, 2003 was a record year with 53 nests in the refuge, up from 19 nests in 2002. Previous high record was 50 in 2001. As for other wildlife, the refuge provides important habitat for the Florida scrub jay, gopher tortoise, beach mouse and threatened plant species.

