

# Media Release

9 December 2022

## Be mindful of sea turtles nesting and hatching during coming months

Summer school holidays bring about increased visitation to our beaches, that's why it's important to keep in mind that you might be sharing the beach with a nesting turtle.

Six of the world's seven turtle species visit the coastal waters of our region at various times of the year but only four species are known to nest on our beaches.

Gladstone Regional Council is committed to protecting marine turtles and their habitats during turtle season from November to March, with female turtles already beginning to come ashore to nest.

Gladstone Region Councillor Darryl Branthwaite said there are several steps everyone can take to ensure they don't have an impact on turtles, all while still enjoying the wonder of turtle season.

"If beach goers happen to come across a nesting turtle, we ask you observe them from a distance as they are timid and easily disturbed," Councillor Branthwaite said.

"When driving on beaches where vehicles are permitted, only drive on the hard sand below the high-tide mark to avoid interfering with turtle nests.

"Turtle hatchlings are guided to the ocean by following the lowest bright horizon, so it's important to reduce the use of artificial lights on the beach, such as torches or flash photography, so they don't become disorientated."

You can also help reduce the impact of urban glow and lights on nesting marine turtles by:

- Turning off lights you don't need
- If you live near the beach, use turtle-friendly outdoor lighting and vegetation to help create a light barrier
- Closing curtains or blinds in rooms where light is needed
- Keep lights off when on the beach.

Council is expecting that thousands of baby turtles will start emerging from their nests in the sand dunes and making their way to the sea from January.

If you observe turtle tracks or a nesting turtle, please report your sighting to the relevant group so it can be captured as important data to inform turtle conservation:

- Boyne Island, Tannum Sands, Gladstone Harbour area – report to Fitzroy Basin Association via their website (<https://fba.org.au/marine-turtle-season-report-a-sighting/>)
- Agnes Water, Seventeen Seventy headland to Springs Beach – report to Discovery Coast Environmental Group by texting the location (beach name) and a photo to 0427 358 201.

**MORE**

To report a sick, injured or dead turtle, phone the Queensland Government Wildlife Hotline on 1300 130 272.

Please visit [www.gladstone.qld.gov.au/wildlife#turtles](http://www.gladstone.qld.gov.au/wildlife#turtles) for more information on what Council is doing to protect marine turtles and their habitat.

Dog owners are reminded that certain Agnes Water beaches are dog-free zones between November to March including Chinaman's Beach, Springs Beach and Red Rock Beach.

**ENDS**