

Island Review July 2020

Submitted by Valerie Rohrig

Emmie, Hulk, Selma, Scoobie, Hitch and #6 (not named yet). You might be wondering WHAT is this woman talking about? These are the sea turtles that have been rescued so far by members of the Emerald Isle Sea Turtle Patrol! All of these turtles are currently recovering at the Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center down in Surf City. It's been a busy spring for us transporting stranded sea turtles first to CMAST in Morehead City to be stabilized, then on down to KBSTR&RC.

Even though we are the SEA TURTLE PATROL, we have chased and/ rescued several other species of animals this spring. Carla Aldridge (Co coordinator of Zone 10), has also become our volunteer EISTP Bird Responder. Carla has, with various helpers, rescued several Loons, a Sweetwater, a Gannett and a pelican thus far. If you find an injured bird, please call the non emergency number for the city and stay with the bird until we arrive!. Once rescued, the birds were transported to OWLS or Possumwood for treatment. We were called to help with baby otters, but they disappeared before we could assist. Finally, we investigated the presence of a nest laid by a land turtle in a local park. There never seems to be a dull day for our Response team members.

As of the writing of this article, Emerald Isle can already claim 2 nests. The female turtle that laid the first nest was actually seen by people as she was returning to the water after she completed the nest. Cousins Reece Copeland (age 6) and Molly Copeland (age 5) got the observe the amazing sight of a sea turtle lumber back into the surf after laying her nest . About 12 hours later, Nest number 2 was discovered by Zone Coordinator Patricia Kellish. Both nests appear to be Loggerhead turtles.

Due to COVID 19, we have had many changes to our operations this year. We had to cancel our annual New Volunteer Orientation training day this spring. We will welcome and train new volunteers next season. Due to regulations, only trained volunteers are permitted to be in the trench when the hatchlings emerge,. Even though we can't train any new volunteers, interested people are more than welcome to join us at nests this summer to observe and enjoy the excitement. PLEASE follow the 6 feet social distancing rule whenever you are around the nests.

The nests procedures this summer will look different as well. In addition to marking off the nest areas, for now safety perimeters will be erected whenever volunteers are working with the nests. This is for the safety of everyone! We respectfully ask residents and visitors to abide by the safety procedures we might ask you to follow this season.

In the June issue, I introduced some of the members of our EI Nest Response Team. This month I asked Ruthie Gomez-Stuart, our program Co Coordinator to explain how she got involved in the turtle program. These are Ruthie's words: "While taking a walk on the beach back in the summer of 2014, my husband and I stumbled upon a Sea Turtle nest excavation. No clue as to what that was, but a volunteer was eager to share their knowledge and I was enthralled to listen and learn. An Island Review July 2020 issue Submitted by Valerie Rohrig Photo courtesy of Heather Copeland turtle, is not just a turtle learned a girl from the Bronx! The next spring, I was the first one at the orientation training and I am here today, loving every minute (well, almost every minute) of what I'm doing today. I've become that eager volunteer willing to share and show what lives on our beach"!! Check out of webpage at: eiseaturtlepatrol.org You can also "Like" our Facebook page from there too. Remember to leave only your footprints on the beach!