

Best Management Practices for Harrison County, Mainland Mississippi Beaches: Sea Turtle Nesting



Audubon has been involved in the conservation of coastal wildlife and the habitat they depend on in coastal Mississippi since June 2014. Following the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, Audubon received grant funding to implement monitoring and stewardship for coastal wildlife including beach-nesting birds and nesting sea turtles.

Audubon has developed five Best Management Practices (BMPs) to guide current and future efforts to protect sea turtle nesting on mainland beaches in Harrison County. Several of these BMPs are already in place, but future conservation efforts depend on input and participation from community members, beach-front businesses, organizations, municipalities, and local legislators. Every contribution towards one of these BMPs helps these vulnerable species remain a part of Mississippi’s vibrant coast.

- 1** **Mark each reported sea turtle nest** using stakes and survey ribbon and post signage with educational information regarding legal protections in addition to contact information for local agencies.
- 2** **Beach maintenance and recreational activities should be conducted with care** around marked sea turtle nests.
- 3** **Remove temporary structures, equipment, or barriers** that could obstruct a sea turtle hatchlings path to the ocean prior to expected hatching period.
- 4** **Reduce beach trash and predator access to food waste** through installation of bins with wildlife-proof lids, adding bins for fishing lines, and promoting beach clean-up events.
- 5** **Keep dogs on a leash at all times and off of the beach,** per Harrison County ordinances.

How You Can Help

Local businesses, agencies, and community members can help in many ways!

- **Taking the “Share the Shore” pledge** act.audubon.org/a/share-love-and-share-shore.
- **Committing to following and expanding these BMPs for the safety and success of nesting sea turtles.**
- **Reading the full paper, which can be found at** ms.audubon.org/whitepapers.

Contact Information

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Loggerhead Sea Turtle hatchlings. Photo: Blair Witherington