

Alabama Gulf Coast Convention & Visitors Bureau



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Upcoming Workshop to Shed Light on Sea Turtles

Gulf Shores/Orange Beach, AL—As a centerpiece of Alabama’s diverse and plentiful coastal environment, sea turtles remain a mysterious and often misunderstood creature. In an effort to educate residents, visitors and business owners about the unique needs of these animals, a **Sea Turtle Lighting Workshop** will be held Thursday, November 13, 2008 at the Gulf Shores Adult Activity Center. The two hour sessions, which are free to attend, will begin at 2:00 p.m. and again at 6:00 p.m.

“Sea turtles are amazing creatures,” said Kelly Reetz, Gulf State Park naturalist. “To think that, a mother sea turtle is wired to remember the location of her birth and then return to that beach every year to lay her eggs is incredible. This area is fortunate to have two of the seven species of sea turtles in the world nest on our beachfront.”

Each summer in Alabama, 50 to 80 sea turtle nests are discovered along the miles of gulf beaches. Most are loggerhead sea turtles. However in the last few years, biologists and volunteers have also documented several nests of the Kemp's ridley, the rarest sea turtle in the world. As a direct result of the efforts of Share the Beach volunteers, greater than 90 percent of hatched turtles make it to the water each season.

Working together to protect sea turtle nesting in Baldwin County, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alabama State Parks, the Share the Beach Program, the Alabama Gulf Coast Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Baldwin County Soil and Water Conservation District have partnered to produce this upcoming lighting workshop, where attendees will learn about the sea turtles that nest in the area, the effect of lights on these turtles and the lights that will work best for the turtles and people. Examples of appropriate lighting that comply with the new Gulf Shores lighting ordinance will be on display. Also, workshop participants will receive a free outdoor, turtle-friendly light on a first come, first served basis.

“Our living shorelines are home to fascinating ecosystems that are a crucial link between the land and sea,” said Dianne Ingram, USFWS biologist. “Residents, property owners and businesses along our beaches can help reduce human impact on nesting sea turtles and their babies.”

Individuals wishing to attend this workshop should RSVP with Dianne Ingram of the USFWS at 251-441-5839 or dianne_ingram@fws.gov.

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Photo caption: Each summer in Alabama, 50 to 80 sea turtle nests are discovered along the miles of gulf beaches. Discover how you can help these unique creatures by attending a Sea Turtle Lighting Workshop, which will be held Thursday, November 13, 2008 at the Gulf Shores Adult Activity Center. The two hour sessions, which are free to attend, will begin at 2:00 p.m. and again at 6:00 p.m.

Photo credit: Roger Reetz



The Alabama Gulf Coast Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) serves as the official destination marketing organization for the cities of Gulf Shores and Orange Beach in addition to the unincorporated area of Fort Morgan. To learn more about Alabama's 32 miles of sugar white sand, visit either www.gulfshores.com or www.orangebeach.com. The CVB is an accredited Destination Marketing Organization, 2008-2012.