

Baby Turtle Fundraising Guide For Students



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Why Save Sea Turtles?

Learn More About
Sea Turtles

Healthy oceans need sea turtles. Sea turtles are a “keystone species”, which means they are an important part of their environment and influence other species around them. If a keystone species is removed from a habitat, the natural order can be disrupted, which impacts other wildlife and fauna in different ways.

CORAL REEFS

Coral reefs are home to hawksbills, which specialize in eating a handful of species of sea sponges. This diet allows less common types of sponges to grow, which increases the variety of life on the reef (also known as “biodiversity”). Without hawksbills, sponges can overgrow and suffocate slow-growing corals causing them to die. As reefs become more and more threatened by climate change and other impacts, the role of the hawksbill on the reef is even more vital.

BEACHES

Sea turtles also have a positive influence out of the water. Nesting sea turtles help beaches by depositing their eggs in the sand. Eggshells and unhatched eggs left behind provide important nutrients that nourish dune vegetation such as beach grasses, which stabilize dunes and help to prevent coastal erosion.

TURTLE PREDATORS

Sea turtles are prey for other animals at all stages of life. Hatchlings are prey for birds, crabs, land mammals, and fish. Adult sea turtles are prey for apex predators like sharks and orcas. On some beaches in Costa Rica, adult female sea turtles are even prey for jaguars that prowl nesting beaches at night, making sea turtles an integral part of food webs on land AND in the ocean!

TURTLE PREY

Different species of sea turtles feed on different things, though most of them like jellyfish. Leatherback sea turtles specialize in eating jellyfish which keeps jellyfish populations in check. If leatherbacks were to disappear, jellyfish populations would explode. Jellyfish prey upon larval fish so without leatherbacks; without these larval fish there would be no fish in the sea! Again, it's all about balance.

Adult green sea turtles primarily eat sea grasses, acting as aquatic lawnmowers which help keep seagrass beds healthy (like mowing your lawn!). Seagrass beds which are found in shallow marine waters, provide habitat, food, and protected nursery areas for many fish species, enabling them to take shelter from predators until they are larger. Healthy seagrass beds also help to stabilize the ocean bottom which helps decrease erosion from wave action and storms.

HELPING OTHERS

Sea turtles provide habitat for an array of “aquatic hitchhikers” like barnacles and other small crustaceans, remoras, algae, and diatoms. Because sea turtles undergo long migrations, they help to transport these species. They also act as sort of an umbrella for fish that use them as shelter from predators. When at the sea surface to breathe or rest, sea turtles also sometimes provide a resting spot for seabirds to land on - sort of like a reptilian aircraft carrier!

IMPORTANCE TO HUMANS

Sea turtles play an important cultural role for many coastal communities around the world. Many indigenous cultures revere them or consider them ancestors. They are also an important source of income for coastal residents through turtle-watching ecotourism. Research has shown that sea turtle ecotourism can generate three times the income than by selling sea turtle parts (eggs, meat, & shells), making them worth more alive than dead.

Sea Turtle Threats

Learn More About
Sea Turtles

The world's seven sea turtle species are classified according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species:

- Leatherbacks: Vulnerable
- Greens: Endangered
- Loggerheads: Vulnerable
- Hawksbills: Critically Endangered
- Olive Ridleys: Vulnerable
- Kemp's Ridleys: Critically Endangered
- Flatbacks: Data Deficient



Some of the reasons that sea turtles are endangered are:

Entanglement in Fishing Gear: This is likely the greatest threat to sea turtles and many other species worldwide. Approximately 40% of all animals caught in fisheries are discarded including marine mammals, sea turtles, seabirds, and other species. [Learn more.](#)

Consumption and Illegal Trade: Despite laws protecting sea turtles in most countries, the illegal trade of eggs, meat, and shells of turtles continues to be a major threat to their survival. These animals are harvested for their meat and eggs which are used for human consumption and in some places are considered a delicacy. [Learn more.](#)

Coastal Development: The human alteration of coastlines forces nesting female turtles to use other beaches, changes the beaches, and contributes to the pollution of sea turtle habitat from runoff and wastewater discharge. More people living or vacationing on the coast means less room for turtles and other animals. [Learn more.](#)

Plastic Pollution: Sea turtles are affected by plastic during every stage of their life. They crawl through plastic on the way to the ocean as hatchlings, swim through it while migrating, confuse it for jellyfish (one of their favorite foods), and then crawl back through it as adults. [Learn more.](#)

Climate Change: Sea level rise from the melting of polar ice is already contributing to the loss of beach and sea turtle nesting habitat. Extreme weather means more frequent and severe storms which alter nesting beaches, cause beach erosion, and flood sea turtle nests. Hotter sand results in fewer hatchings and increased sand temperatures also affect hatchlings since hotter temperatures producing more females. [Learn more.](#)



Where Do the Donations Go?

Our Billion Baby Turtles Project supports sea turtle conservation organizations that work to protect turtle hatchlings at important turtle nesting beaches across Latin America. The funds are used to pay local residents and researchers to patrol the beaches, protecting turtles that come up to nest, and ensuring that the eggs and hatchlings are protected from poachers and predators.

This funding goes to community-based turtle organizations at key nesting beaches. In addition, the funds are used to build and maintain hatcheries where the eggs are protected until they hatch and are released to the ocean. So far, we have helped save more than 2 million baby turtles at more than 20 beaches around the world! Students have been a big part of that success, helping save more than 300,000 baby turtles.

We work with organizations whose work we know intimately and we prioritize nesting beach projects that are newer with less stable sources of funding and immediate threats like poaching.

Turtle Conservation Projects We Support

Hawksbill Turtles

There are fewer than 1,000 hawksbill turtles along Central America's Pacific coast. We support the efforts of local organization ProCosta to pay local residents in El Salvador to collect the eggs and bring them to a turtle hatchery for protection until they are released after hatching. We also support hawksbill projects in Nicaragua, Mexico, Panama, and elsewhere. [Learn more about our support of ProCosta on our blog here.](#)



Leatherback Turtles

These largest of turtles are considered vulnerable. Our funding supports community-based conservation projects on Costa Rica and Panama's Caribbean coast through Latin American Sea Turtles and the Sea Turtle Conservancy, helping to build hatcheries and pay for researchers to protect nesting beaches. We also support a project on Mexico's Pacific coast by the Kutzari Project, as well as in Grenada.

Green Turtles

Billion Baby Turtles supports several projects that help protect green turtles in Mexico on both the Pacific coast. Donations go to the University of Michoacan's green turtle project on the Pacific coast at Colola Beach. So far, we have helped save over a million hatchlings at this beach alone! We also support green turtle nesting projects in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Indonesia, and elsewhere. [Learn more about our support of Colola on our blog here.](#)

Learn More About
Our Partners

Donation Thank You Gifts

When you fundraise to help save baby turtles, you not only get the satisfaction of knowing you are helping to make a difference, you can also get fun gifts! Gifts depend on the amount you raise, here is what you can earn!

Raise \$50

- Personalized certificate showing how many hatchlings you saved
- Set of hatchling postcards and stickers
- Sea Turtle ID Card

Raise \$100

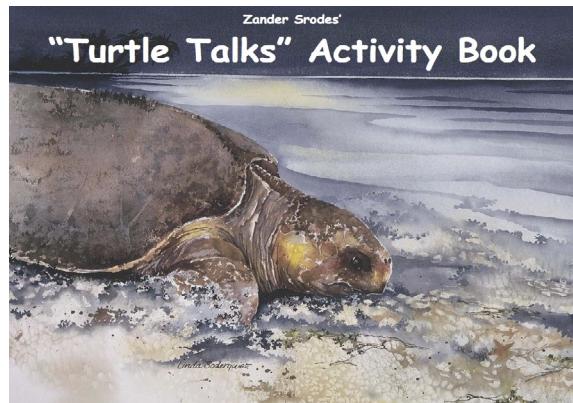
- Personalized certificate showing how many hatchlings you saved
- Set of hatchling postcards and stickers
- Sea Turtle ID Card
- Turtle Talks Activity Book
- Organic cotton plush turtle

Raise \$200

- Personalized certificate showing how many hatchlings you saved
- Set of hatchling postcards and stickers
- Sea Turtle ID Card
- Turtle Talks Activity Book
- Organic cotton plush turtle
- Handmade beaded turtle keychain
- Bracelet from Pura Vida Bracelets

Raise \$500

- Personalized certificate showing how many hatchlings you saved
- Set of hatchling postcards and stickers
- Sea Turtle ID Card
- Turtle Talks Activity Book
- Organic cotton plush turtle
- Handmade beaded turtle keychain
- Bracelet from Pura Vida Bracelets
- Green sea turtle print



Students Saving Sea Turtles

For about a year cousins Elizabeth and Natalie had been helping their families to use less plastic and decrease their waste. Both girls were saddened to learn about how plastic affects sea creatures and the impact it has on the earth. They decided to form Sea Savers (beaseasaver.com) to encourage others to use less plastic, raise money to help sea creatures, and help clean up the ocean.

To start, they created a website and slideshow to further explain the impact of plastic and simple changes people could make. To raise money, they ordered Pura Vida bracelets in custom colors to look like the ocean. They decorated notebooks with pictures of turtles, dolphins, and narwhals, and why it is important to use less plastic. With these and a few additional items they sold their products to family and friends, had a table at a garage sale, and even a stand at the local Farmer's Market. At the end of their first fundraising session they had raised enough to save 5,000 baby turtles.

Trevor and Maddox raised \$130.00 for the sea turtles as part of a school empathy project. They planned out how they were going to raise money in school. They made informational flyers to hand out to businesses and residential homes to spread awareness about saving the sea turtles. They also set up a Go Fund Me account to easily collect money. We made T-shirts for the boys to wear while handing out flyers. The boys were very happy that they saved 1300 sea turtles!

Alexa, Emma, and Maeve are a group of 4th grade girls who live on Long Island in New York. As a fundraiser, they decided to sell friendship beads on the beach in Fire Island to save the turtles. They raised \$79.50 in 3 hours, enough to save about 800 baby turtles!

Students from Kettle Moraine High School in Wales, WI did a 'Make a Difference' project. For this project, the students chose to combat plastic waste, specifically with plastic straws. They bought 200 stainless steel straws and sold them at a local event, and sold out! We made over \$500 that was donated directly to save 5,000 baby turtles. They were so encouraged by this that we decided to make a business and named it SteelTurtles. SteelTurtles now has the mission to create 0% waste with plastic straws and to protect our oceans.

After having learned about the harmful impact of plastic pollution, Annabel was motivated to support an organization that would campaign against the use of plastic and protect baby sea turtles. She has always been in awe of sea turtles, having seen them on snorkel trips in Costa Rica and Guadeloupe. Annabel and her friends Brooke and Sami were excited to learn about SEE Turtles, and they hosted an ice cream and lemonade stand fundraiser. Inspired to continue this mission, Annabel decided this past summer to do another fundraiser for SEE Turtles, through a stamp magnet making business. She created sets of whimsical stamp magnets on wood discs made with colorful glittered embossing powder. She raised \$70 through the sale of over 80 homemade magnets, which she sold to family, friends and neighbors.



Turtle Hatchling Postcards & Stickers

Our most popular fundraising method is to sell our beautiful turtle hatchling postcards and stickers (photos at right). Each one can be sold for a \$1 donation and represents 10 baby turtles saved. We require a small deposit to send the cards or stickers (depending on the quantity needed) which comes out of the total raised and we cover the cost of shipping and printing.

How It Works:

Order through SEE Turtles
(allow one week for delivery). For
every 100 postcards or stickers, we request
a deposit of \$20. The deposit is deducted
from your final donation amount.
We cover the shipping and printing costs.

Contact us at Brad@SEEturtles.org for
more information or to order.

Billion Baby Turtle Postcards



Fundraising Ideas

Cleanup Fundraiser

Organizing a community cleanup project, is yet another way to fundraise and send a positive message at the same time. Pick a convenient day or weekend and a location that needs some help. Look around for local organizations that run regular cleanups to see if they have suggestions for a location. Here your group's participants solicit pledges from the usual suspects - family, friends, and neighbors.

Pledges are tied to a specific attainment goal such as the number of pounds of trash collected or the number of road miles cleaned of debris. You'll need to create a one-page overview of your cleanup program and a pledge signup sheet.

It works best if your overview specifies a suggested range for donations, say anywhere from a penny to a dime a pound for a large project. An amazing amount of garbage can be collected from a local stream or an illegal dumping area, so it's not a bad idea to also put a maximum limit on a pledge amount of say, \$20.

Adapted from: www.fundraiserhelp.com/free-fundraisers.htm

Recycling Fundraiser

If your state has deposits on things like bottles and cans, you can collect those and redeem them for money, which can be used to help save baby turtles! Depending on the amount per bottle collected, you can save a baby turtle with every bottle (or 2 bottles if it is 5 cents per bottle)! You can look up your state [at this link](#).

Ask your fellow classmates to bring in their recyclables every day and collect them at the school. You can also go around to your neighbors and ask them to collect them and give them to you every week. The bottles can be turned in for money either at supermarkets or collection centers, depending on your state.

You can also look up Terracycle, a great organization that recycles products, to see if you can earn points for recycling different things. When you recycle with them, you can earn points that can then be sent to organizations like ours as donations. [Learn more about Terracycle here](#). [Cartridges for Kids](#) is another organization that will accept empty ink cartridges, cell phones, laptops, and more and make donations to non-profits like SEE Turtles.

Sell Resuable Straws & Bags

Plastic bags and straws can impact sea turtles but the good news is there are great alternatives to single use plastic. Many students have decided to sell things that can help reduce our use of plastic while raising money at the same time.

Here are a couple of companies that set up fundraisers with plastic alternatives:

- [EcoLunchBox](#)
- [Chico Bag](#)
- [Strawsome](#)

Fundraising Ideas

Door To Door For Pennies Fundraising

Go door to door asking for pennies for whatever your group is trying to raise money for. If they try to give you any coins other than a penny, refuse but say that you will gladly take paper money. Most people are confused at the fact that you will only take pennies, but then smile and usually give you some form of paper money. It is best to carry a bucket for the coins, but be aware someone might just give you a big bucket of pennies, so have a place to put them for the time being (like in a car or somewhere where they will not all be seen).

When you get enough pennies (about 5-6 ice cream buckets full), take them to the bank. Most banks will let you change coins to bill for free, as long as you have an account there. You will most likely make the most money on the paper money, but the pennies may make up a significant portion of your earning.

Adapted from: www.fundraising-ideas.org/DIY/pennydoortodoor.htm

Mondo Yard Sale

A fundraising event that doesn't cost a lot is having a "Mondo Yard Sale," usually coordinated as a group effort and conducted in a high traffic location such as a school or church parking lot. As with any yard sale, advance publicity is as easy as putting up signs advertising the event.

Have your supporters scavenge their closets, attics, and garages for unwanted items. Don't bother with individually pricing anything. Just place it out for display with other similar items and get what you can for each piece. The greenest products are ones that were already purchased; a successful yard sale will keep a lot of things out of the landfill.

A multi-family yard sale like this will draw Saturday morning shoppers in droves, so be ready to start early. Expect your first customers at the proverbial crack of dawn. Having a good mix of items is helpful as not all your buyers will be searching for the same things. Popular items include furniture, tools, clothing, and toys.

You can increase your donations, volunteers, and net proceeds by offering a percentage split to donors of large ticket items. They get rid of the old lawn mower and when it sells for \$40, they keep \$20. Don't forget to engage in a little give and take with your customers. Part of the fun of a yard sale is bargain hunting, so make sure all your sellers understand the art of making the deal.

Adapted from: www.fundraiserhelp.com/events-2.htm

Birthday Fundraisers

Birthdays are a great time to raise money. We have had many students ask for donations to save baby turtles instead of gifts. You can share [our donation page](#) and make sure they note that the donations are in honor of your birthday so we can keep track.

You can also set up fundraisers on Facebook, we have [instructions on how you can do that on this page](#). Be sure to choose either SEE Turtles or Billion Baby Turtles when you set it up and let us know so we can share with our followers as well!

Baby Turtle Fundraising Contest

Every fall, Billion Baby Turtles holds a contest where classes and students raise funds to help save baby turtles. Students can raise funds however they choose but prizes need to be in by the deadline to qualify.

In 2019, the contest begins on Oct. 14th and ends Nov. 15th. All funds must be sent in either through the website or postmarked by the deadline.

Student Prizes:

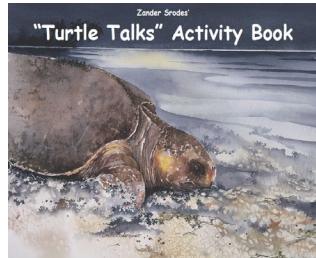
The top 3 raising students will win a prize pack plus a certificate and turtle ID guide. All students raising at least \$50 will receive a personalized certificate, postcard, sticker, activity book, and turtle ID guide.

* Note: Students participating as part of a class group are not eligible. Due to shipping costs, we can only offer prizes for US-based students.

Each winning student will receive an Eco-Prize Pack that includes:

- [Endangered Species Chocolate](#) bar (milk chocolate)
- Box of [Nature's Path EnviroKidz](#) snack bars
- Turtle sticker & hatchling postcard
- [Turtle Talks Activity Book](#) (up to grade 8)
- String bracelet from [Pura Vida Bracelets](#)
- [Turtle Bath Fizzy](#) from [Smith & Vandiver](#) (up to grade 4)
- Metal straw from [The Sandstraw](#)

Learn More &
Register Here



Fundraising Resources

[Green America, Greening School Fundraisers](#)

[Eco-Centric Fundraising Ideas](#)

[Environmentally Friendly Fundraising Ideas](#)

[Earth Friendly Fundraisers](#)

[10 Eco-Friendly School Fundraising Ideas](#)

[53 School Fundraising Ideas](#)



About Us

SEE Turtles was launched in 2008 as the world's first effort to protect these species through ecotourism. Since then, we have expanded to include educational programs and our Billion Baby Turtles project. To date, we have brought more than 1,200 people to visit turtle projects, generated more than \$1 million for turtle conservation and local communities, saved more than 2 million turtle hatchlings at more than 20 projects around the world, are leading efforts around the world to end the tortoiseshell trade, and reached more than 10,000 students with our educational programs. As a result of our success, SEE Turtles received the prestigious 2019 Changemakers Award from the World Travel & Tourism Council. SEE Turtles is an independent 501c3 organization based in Oregon.

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