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CALL OUR DEDICATED HOTLINE: +599 780-0433
SAVE A SEA TURTLE!
Report any problems and also please call us if you see or have seen people harassing sea turtles.
Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire’s mission is to ensure that Bonaire’s sea turtles have a secure future, and to connect people to sea turtle conservation in ways that inspire caring for nature.

Fortunately for the turtles, this particular exotic meat fad didn’t last long. Unfortunately for the turtles, the overharvesting of these shelled reptiles in the past is why they are still threatened with extinction today.

Almost three decades of sea turtle conservation on Bonaire, including scientific research, monitoring, education and advocacy, has not only resulted in increased awareness amongst the local community and island visitors, but has also led to their direct involvement in the protection of sea turtles.

REHAPING TRADITIONAL CULTURAL VALUES

Just like our community, sea turtles on Bonaire can only thrive when our ecosystems are healthy. That’s why STCB addresses issues that directly affect sea turtles as well as biodiversity in general and social well-being on our island.
In-water surveys are one of the scientific methodologies that we use to collect data on resident populations of green and hawksbill sea turtles. This data allows us to estimate yearly sea turtle abundance and long-term population trends. In 2019, these surveys were conducted on the west coast of Bonaire and around Klein Bonaire by STCB staff and volunteers.

**THE JOB**

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**Green turtle transect-count survey** in NWB, SWB and KB in February-May 2003-2018. Based on statistical modeling, green turtle numbers remained stable, showing no trend, but with abundance fluctuating around an average of about 500 individuals in the surveyed area.

**Hawksbill turtle transect-count survey** in NWB, SWB and KB in February-May 2003-2018. Based on statistical modeling, hawksbill turtle numbers remained stable, showing no trend, but with abundance fluctuating around an average of about 70 individuals in the surveyed area.
To address other biodiversity and social issues, STCB also collects data on species that are important for our local fishing community and the coral reefs, the base of our economy. For instance, in 2019 we collected population data on barracudas, rainbow and midnight parrotfish, sharks and rays.

Based on a solid data set of 16 years, cutting-edge field methodology, data analysis and modeling, STCB estimates sea turtle abundance to be 555 green and 70 hawksbill turtles along the west coast of Bonaire and around Klein Bonaire. There is no trend for green and hawksbill turtles in western Bonaire. Clearly, the east coast of Bonaire still needs to be surveyed and STCB is working out the logistics of this challenging task for 2020.

Biodiversity and Community

To address other biodiversity and social issues, STCB also collects data on species that are important for our local fishing community and the coral reefs, the base of our economy. For instance, in 2019 we collected population data on barracudas, rainbow and midnight parrotfish, sharks and rays.

In-Water Surveys
Recapture(s) of individually marked sea turtles provide us with valuable information for their conservation. This includes growth rate, approximate age, presence/absence of disease, human and/or natural induced injuries and overall health of the resident population. Additionally, by taking DNA samples of captured turtles, we get a better insight in the distribution and composition of Caribbean Sea turtle populations.

Green turtle net-capture surveys inside Lac Bay between 2003 and 2018. Based on statistical modeling, green turtle numbers increased, showing a significant trend, with abundance reaching about 500 green turtles in 2018.

SAFETY FIRST: Due to hazardous conditions to human health associated with the influx of sargassum in Lac Bay in June, STCB could not collect sufficient data in 2019 to compare population numbers with previous years. We suspect the putrefaction of dead organisms in the large amount of sargassum that entered the bay to be the cause of these hazardous conditions.
Bonaire is a developmental habitat for green and hawksbill sea turtles, meaning that juveniles and sub-adults permanently forage in our waters. The area on Bonaire with the highest density of green sea turtles is Lac Bay, a shallow lagoon on the east coast and also the biggest Ramsar site on the island. This bay is an exceptional habitat for our foraging sea turtles. Our capture-tag-recapture research from the last five years shows that green turtles in Lac Bay grow an average of 5.65 centimeters per year, compared to 2.44 centimeters for green turtles on the west coast. Green sea turtles reach sexual maturity between the ages of 25 and 40 years, when their carapaces are 76 - 91 centimeters in length.
THE JOB

Between May and December, every morning staff and volunteers patrol the beaches most used by nesting turtles to record activities, including false crawls (unsuccessful nesting attempt, no eggs laid), confirmed nests (eggs were located) and suspected nests (eggs could not be observed, but site disturbance suggests that a nest was laid). Finally, after each hatching event, the nest is excavated and an inventory of the contents is made to calculate hatching success.
The long-term trend in nesting for both hawksbills and loggerheads remain stable and continue to suggest that the populations are fluctuating around an average of 18 nests for loggerheads and 40 nests for hawksbills on our index beach.

Number of hawksbill and loggerhead turtle nests found in Klein Bonaire’s No Name Beach between 2003 and 2019.

Bar plot of standardized searches in Klein Bonaire’s No Name Beach resulted in 31 hawksbill turtle nests and 18 loggerhead turtle nests found between May and December 2019.

Average hatching success rate

Average number of eggs per nest
Sea turtles are migratory throughout their entire life. The information received from the satellite transmitters provides valuable insight into the turtles’ foraging and breeding habits. Identifying sea turtles’ migratory routes and distant foraging grounds also aids understanding the regional patterns of the species and provides valuable information in support of regional strategies for conservation.

Studies with young sea turtles suggest that a turtle’s navigational skill involves magnetoreception — the ability to detect the Earth’s magnetic field. The Earth’s field is one of several cues that guide newly hatched turtles. Farther out to sea, magnetic fields unique to different geographic areas function as navigational markers. Older juveniles learn the magnetic topography of the area where they live and develop ‘magnetic maps’ which permit navigation toward specific target areas. A recent study has confirmed for the first time that adult turtles, like hatchlings and juveniles, use the Earth’s magnetic field to guide their movement.
Each year, STCB organizes a minimum of 24 public presentations and workshops to educate the general public, volunteers and schoolchildren about endangered sea turtles and their habitats. An essential part of endangered species conservation is simply to help people to understand the species and their importance, not only to their habitat, but to our lives as well.

Year after year new volunteers, interns, staff and students learn about the biology, ecology and conservation of sea turtles while participating in STCB’s projects and activities. At STCB, we believe that these hands-on experiences are the most valuable of all when it comes to creating awareness and positive changes in human behavior towards the protection, not only of sea turtles in particular, but of the whole natural environment surrounding us.
The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has identified five major hazards to sea turtles: fisheries bycatch, direct take, coastal development, pollution in the form of plastics/discarded fishing gear, and, of course, climate change.

The most serious challenges facing Bonaire’s sea turtles are not direct threats like fisheries. Instead, they are indirect and mostly related to a rapidly increasing human population and, consequently, development. These indirect threats to sea turtles are also the major hazards to Bonaire’s rich ecosystems, biodiversity, and our quality of life.

2019 was a lucky year for six sea turtles on Bonaire. Two of them were saved/rescued by fishermen and one by kite surfers. These individuals were freed from their entanglement with the cooperation of STCB staff and escaped a certain awful death either by drowning or starvation. A huge thanks to all the people that reported entangled and/or injured sea turtles in 2019!

Unfortunately, we also had a total of 6 juvenile and adult sea turtles dying in Bonaire waters during 2019. Main causes include boat strikes and entanglement. Additionally, we had a curious case of a decapitated sea turtle which we can only explain at this point as a foil surfing accident. Yet, we cannot be certain of this being the cause.
INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS
Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST)
World Wildlife Fund Netherlands (WWF-NL)

REGIONAL/RESEARCH PARTNERS
CARMABI (Curaçao)
Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA)
Groningen University
Loggerhead Marinelife Center
Nature Foundation St. Maarten
Parke Nacional Arikok (Aruba)
Saba Conservation Foundation
Sea Turtle Conservation Curacao
St. Eustatius National Parks Foundation
Wageningen University

LOCAL PARTNERS
Bonaire Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DRO)
Echo Bonaire
EZ Ministry of Economic Affairs
Jong Bonaire
NGO Platform
Openbaar Lichaam Bonaire (OLB)
STINAPA Bonaire
WILDCONSCIENCE B.V.

LOCAL BUSINESS PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS
These businesses provide ongoing support to STCB programs and activities through the donation of in-kind materials and/or services:

Administratiekantoor Brandaris
Adventure Makers Bonaire
Beyond the Corals
Bonaire Marine Center B.V.
Bonaire East Coast Diving
Carib Inn (Bruce Bowker)
Cargill Salt Bonaire
Coral Paradise
Dive Friends Bonaire
Div’Ocean
Elements
Harbour Village Beach Resort
Harbour Village Marina
Mangrove Info Center
Nautico Marina
Nos Consuelo
SELIBON
VIP Diving
Wil’s Grill

2019 VOLUNTEERS
BEACHKEEPER PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

FISHING LINE PROJECT CORE VOLUNTEERS
Hans & Jannie Koning

IN-WATER SURVEY/NETTING VOLUNTEERS

OFFICE & PRESENTATION VOLUNTEERS
Audrey Zamkow
Hans & Jannie Koning
Loek Maartens
STCB is a non-profit, non-governmental organization. We raise funds through conservation and research grants and contracts, merchandise sales and from individual and business donors.

**FLAGSHIP FUNDER 2008 – 2019**
Since 2008, **WWF - Netherlands** has been the flagship funder for STCB’s sea turtle conservation work on Bonaire.

**MAJOR FUNDERS**

- Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy
- DierenLot
- Blue Jay bv

**PLATINUM FUNDERS/DONORS [$1000+]**
- Barbara Chu
- Blue Jay Holding B.V.
- Casa Prestioso
- Cargill Salt Bonaire
- ContourGlobal Bonaire
- Dive Friends Bonaire
- Gijs, Mieke, Daan, Sam & Florine Botman
- Parrot Island Divers
- Rob Hulsbergen

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- Administratiekantoor Brandaris
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- Best Cellars Bonaire
- Bonaire Office Systems
- Brave Water Foundation
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- Buts Technical Consultancy
- Cadushy Distillery
- Dan & Christine Fisher
- dNM Interim
- Doris & Martin Elle
- Dr. Robert Andrew Rutherford Trust
- Hamlet Oasis Resort
- Harbour Village Beach Resort
- Harbourtown Real Estate
- HVK Stevens
- International Tax Advisors BV
- Jim & Judy Kewley
- Joan & Alan Zale
- Labor Omnia Vincit BV
- Lock & Vera Maartens
- Michael & Anne Contratto
- Moon Tower
- Mrs. Van Lede
- Nagico Insurances
- Nederlands-Belgische Schildpaddenvereniging
- Patricia Coe
- QVillas Bonaire
- RE/MAX Paradise Homes
- Sand Dollar ‘Ca’nesta’
- Sand Dollar Turtle Lovers Club 1
- Sand Dollar Turtle Lovers Club 2
- Sunbelt Realty Bonaire
- Sundhevy & Stijn
- The Laughing Seahorse
- Villa Kiki
- VIP Diving
- Wadyckis Family

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- Paul Hoetjes
- Peter Ollendorf
- Robert & Simone Scott & Carole Johnson
- Thorsten Albrecht

**BRONZE DONORS [$50 - $99]**
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- Jan, Paul, Derk, Hans & Hans
- Kevin & Sue O’Brien
- Lea Diem
- Lindsey Johnson
- M. Liedorp
- Marcus Ollinger
- Marinus de Wilde
- Simone Penders
- Anonymous donors
Whether it’s $5, $100, or $5,000, whatever you give makes an important difference. 100% of funds received online will go directly to the protection of Bonaire’s endangered sea turtles (only the Paypal fee will be deducted).

Your donation will help fund the following programs: nest monitoring, in-water surveys, clean-up events, turtle rescues, education and awareness pro-grams, training, advocacy and satellite tracking.

As of January 1st 2015, the Dutch Tax Service (Belastingdienst) has granted to Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire ANBI status. ANBI status also favors STCB’s Donors in countries that grant tax concessions to foreign registered charities, as well as those based in the Netherlands. Donors who have made a donation to STCB may be able to deduct the amount from taxable income. More information regarding STCB’s ANBI status here.

You can help protect Bonaire’s sea turtles by donating to STCB. We welcome – and depend on – the financial support of people like you.

STCB SHOP

Available only on Bonaire, STCB clothing is made from soft, earth-friendly 100% organic cotton & recycled plastic bottles. STCB pendant necklaces are made from bone, beach seed & horn. They are the product of artisans in Costa Rica & Bonaire.

TEES - HATS - NECKLACES

You can buy original STCB T-shirts, research hats and jewelry at the Mangrove Info Center, Dive Inn, VIP Diving, Dive Friends Bonaire Retail Store, Harbour Village Beach Club, Dive Friends Courtyard by Marriott, Delfins Beach Resort and at our office. Because these businesses donate their retail services, 100% of the profits from every STCB item you buy go directly to sea turtle conservation.

Our office is open on weekdays between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. We are located at Kaya Korona 53, Kralendijk, Bonaire, Caribbean Netherlands.

WAYS TO DONATE

DONATE ONLINE THROUGH PAYPAL

Please be advised that donations to STCB are processed via PayPal by Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) of which STCB is a member.

DONATE BY BANK TRANSFER

BANK TRANSFER ON BONAIRE

Beneficiary: Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire
Account name: Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire
Account number: 101169209
Beneficiary Bank: Maduro & Curiel’s Bank (Bonaire) N.V.
Address: Kaya L.D. Gerharts #81
City: Kralendijk
Country: Bonaire, Caribbean Netherlands
Telephone number: +599-715-5520
Fax number: +599-717-7249
Swift Code: MCBKBQBN
Correspondent Bank for Euro: Ing Belgium SA NV
City: 24 Avenue Marnix, B-1000, Brussels
Country: Belgium
Swift Code: BBRUBEBB

BANK TRANSFER IN USD OUTSIDE BONAIRE

Beneficiary: Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire
Account number: 101169209
Beneficiary Bank: Maduro & Curiel’s Bank (Bonaire) N.V.
Swift code: MCBKBQBN
Correspondent Bank: Standard Chartered Bank
Aba # 026002561
Swift Code: SCBLUS33

BANK TRANSFER IN EUR FROM THE NETHERLANDS

Beneficiary: Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire
Account number: NL71 RABO 0313 2425 26
Beneficiary Bank: Rabobank

When making a direct transfer, please mention your e-mail address in the comments as we would like to thank you for your donation.

DUTCH CHARITABLE STATUS

As of January 1st 2015, the Dutch Tax Service (Belastingdienst) has granted to Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire ANBI status. ANBI status also favors STCB’s Donors in countries that grant tax concessions to foreign registered charities, as well as those based in the Netherlands. Donors who have made a donation to STCB may be able to deduct the amount from taxable income. More information regarding STCB’s ANBI status here.
ADOPT-A-NEST

Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire offers companies and individuals on Bonaire and further afield the opportunity to Adopt-A-Nest. Adopting a nest is a meaningful way to link your company’s brand or your name to the protection of Bonaire’s most iconic wildlife. You can Adopt-A-Nest by donating $600, thereby investing in a sustainable future for Bonaire’s sea turtles.

NEST ADOPTION BENEFITS

Supporting Bonaire’s widely-loved sea turtles by adopting a nest allows for prominent visibility: through press, word of mouth and social media STCB puts the nest adopters’ name and logo in the spotlight. But that’s not all: the adopters also receive a unique Adopt-A-Nest certificate, and their name and/or logo are displayed on STCB’s Nest-O-Meter.

EACH ADOPTION INCLUDES:

- A certificate of adoption.
- A summary of your adopted nest (e.g. species, number of hatchlings).
- Increased exposure for your company.
- A more secure future for Bonaire’s sea turtles.

HOW A SYMBOLIC NEST ADOPTION HELPS BONAIRE’S SEA TURTLES

Your donation for our Adopt-A-Nest program helps us to protect the nests that are laid on Bonaire’s beaches in the interests of sea turtle survival. Your support enables us to:

- Relocate nests that are in danger of drowning.
- Rescue newborn turtles that become wrapped in roots during hatching.
- Sustain the popular Beachkeeper program.
- Collect data that will help us protect nests better, as well as reveal the health status of Bonaire’s sea turtles.

For more information, please contact STCB at stcb@bonaireturtles.org or +599 717 2225