

## Turtley-awesome opportunity to help save sea turtles

*Free training for volunteers to learn to identify sea turtle nests on Tweed beaches*

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**Do you like to walk the beach? What you notice on your local beach walk could be a vital piece in the puzzle to better understand how sea turtles use NSW beaches for laying their eggs.**

Volunteers will be trained to become citizen scientists and the information they gather will contribute to understanding how to help protect these threatened species in Northern NSW.

Ahead of annual sea turtle nesting season, Tweed Shire Council, in collaboration with its partners in the NSW TurtleWatch program, will be hosting a free community information session to learn more.

**When:** Saturday 21 December, 10am to 12pm

**Where:** Kingscliff Community Hall, 81 Marine Parade, Kingscliff.

There's no need to register, just come along – there's plenty of space for everyone.

The NSW TurtleWatch program has been developed by Australian Seabird Rescue to train volunteers to monitor beaches for nesting sea turtles, identify sea turtle tracks and record potential threats such as plastic, light pollution and beach erosion.

The project will improve understanding about sea turtle nesting in NSW and raise awareness of how to minimise the threats they face.

Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) and Green (*Chelonia mydas*) turtles are both threatened species and they have been found to use NSW beaches for nesting. Sea turtle nesting in NSW is not common so it is important to have as many people looking for them as possible.

Successful turtle nests have been found in NSW from the Queensland border all the way to Forster-Tuncurry. Tweed and Byron areas have had the highest number and density of nests over the last 20 years.

NSW offers turtle nesting beaches with cooler sand temperatures and minimal disturbance from urban development. The temperature of a nest can influence the gender of hatchlings and the hatch success.

With increasing global temperatures, sea turtle populations may become female biased, so the cooler sand temperatures found in NSW could return some male hatchlings into the population.

This project is in partnership with the NSW Government's Saving Our Species program. To find out more about the program visit [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/sos](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/sos)

For more information about the TurtleWatch program, visit <http://seabirdrescue.org.au> or [www.facebook.com/turtlenestprogram](https://www.facebook.com/turtlenestprogram).

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