

# September 2020, Coconut Telegraph

Important information in this issue you won't want to miss!

**\*\*Membership**

**\*\*Environmental Update**

**International Coastal Cleanup** – November 7<sup>th</sup> until November 11<sup>th</sup>

From Director, Deric Flom:

It's that time of the year again. We are looking for volunteers to remove garbage from our mangroves, the inner-island and also from the beach. Islanders can help collect and transport items to a dumpster that will be at Eldred's Marina on Saturday the 11<sup>th</sup>.

All weeklong...

You can drop any full bags from 9-noon at the golf cart shop starting on Tuesday the 7<sup>th</sup>. I will have the forms needed, T-shirts and bags for you to use as well. If you want to work with others email [twrhonda@gmail.com](mailto:twrhonda@gmail.com).

Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup>...

If you want to work with others, meet at the golf cart shop at 9am on Saturday, otherwise there will be a volunteer at the dumpster to help you unload. Larger garbage will be accepted at Eldred's Marina. **(No appliances or TVs).**

Volunteers will receive a T-shirt, as long as you sign up in advance! If you can participate, please visit the volunteer section at [www.lgpoa.org](http://www.lgpoa.org). Be sure to leave your name, email, dates you plan to help, and don't forget shirt sizes for you and your helpers! If you have any questions, please call 941-697-3820.

**\*\*Membership**

From Membership Chair, Dawn Bokar:

New to the island and would like to receive the Coconut Telegraph sent right to your email? Haven't been a member for a while? Take a minute and sign up or

renew online at [www.LGPOA.org/membership](http://www.LGPOA.org/membership) and pay securely via Paypal. You'll receive island news and be up to date on all island happenings! If you're not sure if your membership is renewed for 2020, email me at [dawnbokar@gmail.com](mailto:dawnbokar@gmail.com). Thanks for all of the memberships we've



received! our Islanders and your love for the island!

### **\*\*Environmental Update**

From Florida Wildlife Commission Permit holder for LGI, Bren Cutis:

Sea turtles are graceful swimmers but they have an enemy in the water. It isn't just sharks, it is us driving high-speed boats. Little Gasparilla Island has had two marine turtle strandings this year. An adult female Loggerhead and a juvenile Green Sea Turtle were hit by high-speed boats. According to the Sea Turtle Stranding Network in Florida, boat strikes have tripled in the past 40 years. In 2016, five dead sea turtles were found on Sanibel Island, Florida, in as many weeks. A study out of Duke University correlated this increase in sea turtle collisions with the rapid increase in Florida boat registrations.

Thankfully, turtle rehabilitation facilities are equipped to treat boat strikes if they're reported quickly enough. If you are ever boating and strike an animal or see an animal in trouble, it's best to report it immediately! The sooner responders arrive to the scene, the better chance the animal has at survival. To decrease unintentional harmful interactions between sea turtles and boaters Voluntary Speed Reduction Zones (VSRZ) in offshore waters are being developed.

Conservation organizations are working with local boaters to encourage them to travel at reduced boat speeds during nesting season to reduce unintentional boat strike injuries on sea turtles. Unintentional vessel strikes have become a significant threat to sea turtles in the area. Approximately 20% of all reported stranded turtles in Florida have evidence of previous vessel strikes. Over 90% of all unintentional boat strike injuries seen at sea turtle hospital are fatal.

Conservationists are trying to determine the most effective methods to increase understanding and compliance among boaters and to increase awareness of boaters about the presence of sea turtles in the project area. The lesson is to drive slowly around nesting beaches and in feeding lagoons where turtles may be seen coming up for air. To report a stranded dolphin, whale, manatee or sea

turtle within coastal Southwest Florida, please call the Stranding Investigations Program's 24-hour pager (941) 988-0212. If the stranded turtle is dead call please call (561) 882-5975. For the Mote Lab Turtle Program instructions on what to do please call 941-388-4331.

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Please feel free to email me at [twrhonda@gmail.com](mailto:twrhonda@gmail.com) with any information you'd like circulated in the next month's Coconut Telegraph by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month. Content is reviewed by board members for approval.

Rhonda Olson