



VOLUNTEER 2014

Title:	Sea Turtle Research Volunteer
Department:	Monitoring and Beach Patrol
Location:	Tobago, West Indies
Duration:	1 st March 2014 – 30 th September 2014
Type:	Volunteer

Background Information

Save Our Sea Turtles (SOS) is based in Black Rock, Tobago. Founded in the year 2000, we have been involved in the conservation of critically endangered marine turtle species that nest and forage in the waters around the island of Tobago, through monitoring and conservation of nesting females and hatchlings, research, education and public outreach. Tobago is home to a small but stable population of critically endangered Leatherback, Hawksbill and Green Sea Turtles. Turtle nesting occurs on most of the beaches around the island, many of which are heavily developed with tourism infrastructure.

SOS monitors three key index nesting beaches nightly and also operates a mobile patrol group that monitors other non-index nesting beaches, responds to public reports of turtle activity and emergencies made through our 24-hour Sea Turtle Hotline. This monitoring effort forms part of Trinidad & Tobago's National Sea Turtle Conservation Project, facilitated through the Turtle Village Trust. SOS acts as the Country Coordinator for the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST) in Tobago, and is a founding member of the Turtle Village Trust.

Summary of Activities

The Sea Turtle Volunteer will work closely with and furnish all work products of the SOS Programme Office. Because of the programme's ambitious objectives, the intern will need to be available from 8:00 P.M. to 4:00 A.M., five nights per week and/or as determined by SOS. Volunteers should be physically fit as they will be required to carry out regular foot patrols in soft sand and /or hike in and out of isolated, rugged research areas. Sea turtles often nest in front of hotels, and therefore are highly visible to the public. Ensuring the safety of nesting females & hatchlings, collecting data, and answering questions are all aspects of a SOS patrol. The volunteer will receive no remuneration, and will be required to pay for their own living, lodging, health insurance and all other costs related to their volunteer period with SOS. The volunteer will live and work on the island of Tobago, West Indies for the duration of their volunteer period.

Objectives and Work Product

- Work in cooperation with SOS staff and volunteers in the monitoring, tagging and observation of nesting sea turtles and hatchlings on Tobago's beaches.
- Perform nightly foot patrols at Turtle Beach, Grafton Beach and Mt. Irvine Back Bay. Survey additional beaches as needed as determined by SOS.
- Gather, maintain and compile data through complete and accurate completion of field forms on nesting sea turtles and hatchlings as needed.
- Relocate sea turtle nests and perform nest excavations as necessary.

- Perform periodic day patrols of nesting beaches as needed.
- Assist in emergency response such as stranding, poaching event etc.
- Assistance with research, education and outreach.
- Additional opportunities as projects develop.

Requirements & Training

- Training will be provided.
- Excellent oral and written communication abilities.
- Volunteers should be physically fit.
- Ability to work primarily at night with some daytime work and weekends.
- Ability to work independently in isolated areas for long periods of time.
- Previous sea turtle research or interest in coastal marine ecology experience preferred.
- BSc in Biology, Ecology or other Natural Science; or equivalent work experience preferred.
- Familiarity with night-time monitoring activities such as regular foot patrol, basic data collection, tagging and sampling preferred.

Persons who wish to volunteer should download and fill out the volunteer application form, and return via e-mail or post, along with contact information of two (2) references. Please note the minimum duration required for International volunteers is 3 weeks.

For more information contact:

Save Our Sea Turtles

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SEATURTLES

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