

# Fundraising Guide For Students



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# Why Save Sea Turtles?

Healthy oceans need sea turtles. Sea turtles are an important part of their ocean habitat and influence other species around them. If sea turtles disappear from a habitat, the natural order can be disrupted, which impacts other wildlife.

## **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. Without hawksbills, sponges can overgrow and suffocate slow-growing corals, causing them to die. As reefs become more threatened by climate change and other impacts, the role of the hawksbill on the reef is even more important.

## **BEACHES**

Sea turtles also have a positive influence out of the water. Nesting sea turtles help beaches by burying their eggs in the sand. Eggshells and unhatched eggs provide important nutrients that fertilize 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 food for birds, crabs, land mammals, and fish. Adult sea turtles are prey for large predators like sharks and orcas. On some beaches in Costa Rica, adult female sea turtles are even hunted by 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 will eat jellyfish. Leatherback sea turtles specialize in eating jellyfish which keeps jellyfish populations under control. If leatherbacks were to disappear, jellyfish populations would grow quickly. Jellyfish prey upon larval fish so without leatherbacks, there would be fewer fish in the sea. 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, allowing 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 waves 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 have 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!

## **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 as their 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

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

**Hawksbills:** Critically Endangered

**Kemp's Ridleys:** Critically Endangered

**Green Turtles:** Endangered

**Leatherbacks:** Vulnerable

**Loggerheads:** Vulnerable

**Olive Ridleys:** Vulnerable

**Flatbacks:** Data Deficient

Learn More About  
Sea Turtle Threats

## 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 organizations at important nesting beaches all around the world. 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. [Check out our full list of partners here.](#) We prioritize nesting beach projects that are newer with less stable sources of funding and immediate threats like illegal egg hunting.

## Turtle Conservation Projects We Support

### Hawksbill Turtles

Hawksbills are critically endangered and their population dropped dramatically in the 1900's due to the trade in their shells (known as "tortoiseshell.") We currently support 11 conservation groups working in 10 countries to protect hawksbills, including Mexico, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and El Salvador.

### Leatherback Turtles

These largest of all turtles are considered vulnerable around the world and some populations are critically endangered. Our funding supports 7 leatherback conservation projects on 8 beaches in places like 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.

### Green Turtles

Billion Baby Turtles supports projects that help protect endangered green turtles in 8 countries. Some of the beaches we support are in Mexico, Indonesia, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua.

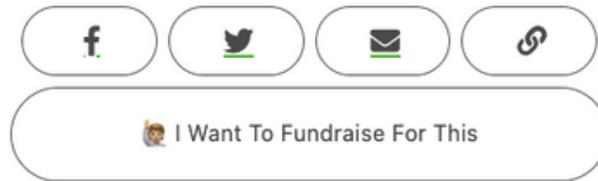


# Set Up A Fundraising Page

**Personalize your own page for your fundraiser to keep track of how the class is doing.**

1. [Visit our Billion Baby Turtles donation page.](#)

2. Sign up to fundraise by clicking on **I Want To Fundraise For This** under the donation form.



3. You will be sent to our Give Lively Fundraising Page site where you can personalize your page. Click on **Confirm Creation of Your Fundraising Page** and a form will pop up to fill out.

## Create A Fundraising Page

Fundraising for Giving Tuesday 2023 by SEE Turtles

Confirm Creation Of Your Fundraising Page

4. Include your:

- a. Name
- b. A personal note about why your class wants to help sea turtles
- c. Your fundraising goal (optional though we recommend it)

5. Click **Save** at the bottom of the page. You will be redirected to the live page, **be sure to save the link**. You will be able to see your progress towards your goal on the page. You will also get an email from Give Lively with a copy of your link to share.

## Share Your Fundraiser:

1. Take your link and share it with your class or community! Can you think of 20 people in your network that would be interested in supporting your fundraiser?
2. Personal and individual text messages and emails are by far the most effective ways to have people support your fundraiser. Group emails or texts rarely motivate people to participate.
3. Share on your social media accounts. Have your student include why they love sea turtles.
4. Follow up at least once or twice with your list.
5. [Contact us here](#) if you want a list of who has donated.

# Fundraising Ideas

## Turtle Hatchling Postcards & Stickers

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

### How It Works:

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

Contact us at [Brad@SEEturtles.org](mailto:Brad@SEEturtles.org) for more information or to order.



## Sticker Fundraiser

Our sponsors [Fin Pin Shop](#) offers their awesome stickers at a 50% discount to use for fundraisers. Choose from a huge variety of great ocean wildlife stickers. Minimum order of at least \$100 is required. Contact them at [finpinshop@gmail.com](mailto:finpinshop@gmail.com) to order and [see their full selection on their website here](#).

## 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](http://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. [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.

# 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

## Raise \$100

- Personalized certificate showing how many hatchlings you saved
- Set of hatchling postcards and stickers
- Turtle Talks Activity Book

## Raise \$500

- Personalized certificate showing how many hatchlings you saved
- Set of hatchling postcards and stickers
- Turtle Talks Activity Book
- Turtle hatchling print (12" x 16")
- Ceramic turtle & paint



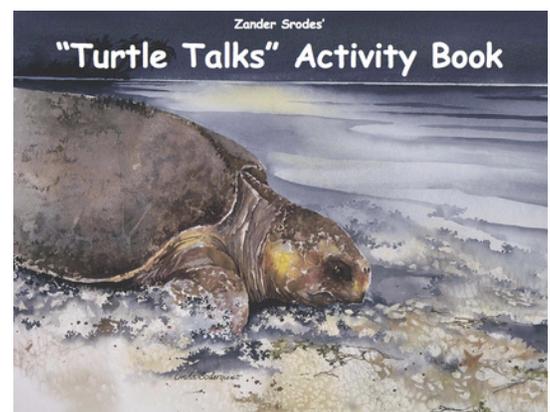
Turtle hatchling print



Ceramic turtle (not painted)



Turtle postcards



# 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 started praying every night that the people who are trying to save the ocean would actually be able to save it. Their parents started reminding them that by reducing their plastic waste they were people trying to save the ocean. The girls thought about this and decided that together they could do more to save the ocean. As such, they decided to form Sea Savers ([beaseasaver.com](http://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 and to support two additional organizations that focus on cleaning up the ocean.

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.

# About SEE Turtles

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 1,500 people to visit turtle projects, generated more than \$1 million for turtle conservation and local communities, saved more than 10 million turtle hatchlings at more than 60 beaches around the world, are leading efforts around the world to end the turtleshell trade, and have reached more than 10,000 students with our educational programs. As a result of our efforts, SEE Turtles received the prestigious Changemakers Award from the World Travel & Tourism Council. SEE Turtles is an independent 501c3 nonprofit organization based in Oregon.

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