An Unusual Species of Sea Turtle
by Whitney Crowder, Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Coordinator

Gumbo Limbo Nature Center maintains an extensive collection of animal specimens that are used during educational programs. Our Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Facility occasionally salvages specimens from deceased sea turtles. Specimens like these are used by organizations such as museums, nature centers, zoos, aquariums, non-profits, and government agencies to enhance public programming.

Earlier this year, we got a surprising call to our emergency line that an olive ridley sea turtle stranded and was being admitted to our facility. Despite being the most abundant of all the sea turtle species in the world, olive ridley sea turtles are extremely rare in Florida’s waters. The olive ridley is the second smallest sea turtle species, and nests mostly in Central and South America. The olive ridley sea turtle admitted to Gumbo Limbo’s Rehabilitation Facility marks only the fifth live olive ridley treated in the United States, according to the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Unfortunately, this turtle suffered from severe injuries and died shortly after arrival. The rehabilitation staff performed an extensive post-mortem examination to determine the cause of death and collected samples to submit for analysis to the University of Florida’s Pathology Laboratory.

Continued on page 13
Nature Center & Aquariums Hours
Monday - Saturday 9 AM - 4 PM, Sunday Noon - 4 PM

Nature Trail Hours
Daily 7 AM - Dusk
Gumbo Limbo Nature Center and all property are closed New Year’s Day, July 4th, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day

Admission
Suggested donation of $5 per person.
Your donations go to Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, Inc. to support Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, including, but not limited to, feeding the animals, purchasing supplies and services for the Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Program, and creating exhibits.

Contact Us
General Information (561) 544-8605 · Program Sign-up (561) 544-8615
Volunteer (561) 544-8538 · Gift Store (561) 544-8610 · Membership (561) 544-8608

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Sea Turtle Conservation Coordinator
David Anderson
Marine Turtle Specialists
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Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Coordinator
Whitney Crowder
Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Assistants
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Friends of Gumbo Limbo
Welcome to another exciting edition of Hammock Happenings, Gumbo Limbo’s bi-monthly newsletter. You can access Hammock Happenings at any time at www.gumbolimbo.org/HammockHappenings. As always, hardcopies are available in the Nature Center.

A common misconception amongst our visitors from Northern climates is that Florida does not have any seasons. While we do not have the traditional Winter/Spring/Summer/Fall that one may experience in more temperate climates, we certainly have seasons!

As our “Tourist Season” comes to a close, our “Turtle Season” is just starting to get busy. Every morning, our sea turtle conservation team is patrolling the beaches of Boca Raton to monitor and protect the sea turtle nests laid on our beaches every evening. Did you know that Florida’s east coast beaches are critical nesting habitat for the loggerhead sea turtle? Keep reading for a look at how a nesting sea turtle creates her nest on the beach. If you’d like to see this spectacle in person, we may have a few reservations available for our turtle walks. Check our website (www.gumbolimbo.org/walk-release) for details.

Our local students are anxiously awaiting their favorite season – Summer! School is OUT and our popular camp programs are IN. Every day brings something different and exciting for our campers from 1st to 9th grade: field trips, boating, seining, exploring, and more! Check our website (www.gumbolimbo.org/summer-camp) for more information and instructions on how to register. For students 16 years and older, Gumbo Limbo provides a perfect opportunity to volunteer. We have openings for camp Counselors in Training as well as for general Summer Volunteers. Contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Rebecca Mannen (RMannen@myboca.us) for more information. Positions are filling quickly, so don’t wait!

May and June are also the months we celebrate – Mother’s Day, Graduation, Birthdays, Father’s Day... all of these are perfect opportunities to give a gift that gives back! Symbolic turtle adoptions and brick pavers make wonderful and meaningful gifts for your loved ones. Be sure to check out our amazing gift shop for one-of-a-kind gifts that fit any budget. Best of all, the money raised from these purchases goes right back into our programs at Gumbo Limbo.

So, whatever your season, and whatever you celebrate, I hope to see you soon!

Thanks for reading...

~ Leanne
Adopt a Turtle

It can be tough to find the perfect gift. Consider giving the gift of charity to those you care about. Hatchling or resident sea turtle "adoptions" available at GumboLimbo.org/Adopt

Membership

Become a member of Friends of Gumbo Limbo! Join, renew, or upgrade your membership today! All proceeds go to GLNC, Inc. 501(c)3 non-profit. Be kept in the loop about upcoming events and programs, and enjoy exclusive discounts and early access. Find the full list of member benefits at GumboLimbo.org/Membership

Turtle Walk & Hatchling Release Programs

Did you know that the best way to participate in Gumbo Limbo's turtle walks and hatchling releases is to be a Friends of Gumbo Limbo member? As spots fill up fast, members receive benefits such as discounts and exclusive pre-sales for our events.

Programs for turtle walks begin June 3rd, but tickets are on sale now for the general public!

Programs for hatchling release begin July 15th, and tickets go on sale exclusively to Friends of Gumbo Limbo members on May 13th and to the general public on May 20th.

You can find more information and how to purchase tickets at www.GumboLimbo.org/Turtle
How Does She Do It?
by David Anderson, Sea Turtle Conservation Coordinator

It’s that time of year when our beaches are visited by nesting sea turtles, emerging from the ocean to lay eggs in the sand. It is a grueling task perfected over millions of years by these amazing reptiles. Locally, we have three species of sea turtles that nest on our beach; the leatherback, loggerhead, and green sea turtle. While each species is unique, they all nest in a similar fashion.

Emergence and Site Selection: At night, the adult female sea turtle is swimming just offshore waiting for the right opportunity to crawl up onto the beach. Once she feels safe to come out of the water, she drags her heavy body up the beach with her flippers. She is seeking a dark location on the beach, free of lights or movement. Sea turtles on land are very skittish and easily spooked. The slightest sense of danger will cause her to cancel the mission and crawl back into the ocean, leaving behind tracks in the sand...but no nest. This is called a non-nesting emergence or false crawl. She may try again later.

Body Pit and Egg Chamber: If she considers the location to be an appropriate place to nest, she will begin preparing the nest site. She will use her flippers to push the dry surface sand aside. She will then wiggle her body into the sand into what is called a body pit. This makes her hard to see and allows her to dig a hole in the moist sand below. She begins digging a hole by reaching in, scooping up sand, and tossing it aside using only her rear flippers. The result is a cylindrical hole, or egg chamber, about 2’ deep and able to fit one hundred or more eggs. One by one she begins laying eggs into the egg chamber. They are soft and rubbery, so they do not crack when falling and landing on top of one another.

Cover and Camouflage: When the egg laying process is complete, she will push sand over the egg-filled chamber with her rear flippers, patting and packing it down nice and tight. Her clutch of eggs is now secured in the egg chamber with a tightly packed layer of sand at the surface, an ideal incubation environment. She then uses her front flippers to fling sand behind her, piling up sand in a nice fluffy mound. This final step is designed to camouflage the nest from predators, but our trained nest surveyors can confirm that she nested and know the approximate location of the eggs.

Return to the Ocean: The entire nesting process can last 30 minutes to 3 hours, depending on the species and individual turtle. When she is satisfied that her nest is covered and hidden, she will turn herself towards the water and begin crawling back to the ocean. She may return to nest again in a couple of weeks and will nest multiple times throughout the season. She will then take a year off from nesting and return to nest every 2 to 3 years.

Photos taken in daylight of early morning nesting turtles. MTP #041.
Do you love animals?
Is education your passion?
Do you want to join an amazing team?
We need you!

GUMBO LIMBO
NATURE CENTER

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

- Aquarium Guide
- Green Thumb Team (Gardening)
- Education Program Assistant
- Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Educator
- Aquarist Assistant
- And More!

For more information visit our website:
www.gumbolimbo.org/volunteers
Call to set up an interview: 561-544-8538
Though pufferfish and porcupinefish may look alike, did you know that they are from different fish families? Pufferfish is a name that is commonly used to describe any fish that can inflate its body as a defense against predators. This leads to a lot of confusion.

Both pufferfish and porcupine fish can quickly expand up to three times their original size to avoid being eaten by predators. They do this by swallowing massive amounts of water (and in some cases, air) to inflate their body. There are a number of differences that will help you identify if you are looking at a pufferfish or a porcupinefish.

True pufferfish are in the Family Tetraodontidae (meaning four teeth). They have two teeth on the top jaw and two teeth on the bottom jaw. If you look closely, you will see gaps between the teeth on the top and the bottom jaws. Pufferfish lack spines and are poisonous. The toxin, called tetrodotoxin, is more poisonous than cyanide with no known antidote. Despite the danger associated with it, carefully prepared pufferfish are eaten as a delicacy throughout the world. Currently, we have three species of pufferfish on display at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center. A sharpnose puffer can be found in the Tropical Coral Reef Aquarium, checkered puffers in the Mangrove aquarium, and bandtail puffers in the Nearshore Reef Aquarium.

Porcupinefishes are in the Family Diodontidae (meaning two teeth). They have only one tooth plate on the upper and lower jaw. The teeth are uniform across with no gaps. Porcupinefishes all have spines that you can see. Some porcupinefish, like the balloonfish, have noticeable spines that lay flat until they inflate, and others, such as the striped burrfish, have spines that stick up all the time. A few species of porcupinefishes are known to contain tetrodotoxin. We currently have three species in the porcupinefish family on display. There is a balloonfish in the aquarium located in the Nature Center, there is a striped burrfish in the Tropical Coral Reef Aquarium, and a porcupinefish (known as “Kirby”) in the Nearshore Reef Aquarium.

Many of these pufferfish seen in our aquariums are common on our local reefs, so the next time you go snorkeling, see if you can tell the difference between a pufferfish and a porcupinefish. Or stop by Gumbo Limbo for a quick lesson!
Nature Program Information

- For most programs, reservations are recommended with walk-ins welcome based on availability. Reservations accepted online (www.gumbolimbo.org) or at (561) 544-8615. Exceptions are noted.
- Programs may be cancelled due to inclement weather or insufficient registrations. No refunds unless cancellation is by Gumbo Limbo Nature Center.
- Many of our programs are family-oriented; children under 18 must participate with an adult unless otherwise specified.
- Friends of Gumbo Limbo members receive a discount on many of our programs. Visit our website (www.gumbolimbo.org/membership) for additional information.

BEACH TREASURES
Sand dollars? Sponges? Oh, what treasures you may find... sea beans, coral, shells, and more; see what the sea has left behind! Meet at the Center to learn about shells and sea life; caravan to Red Reef Beach Park for beachcombing with the experts!
- There is no charge for this program.
- All ages; children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.
- Wednesdays; May 15, June 26; 3:00-4:30 pm
- Reservations recommended.
- Subject to cancellation due to bad weather.

INTRACOASTAL ADVENTURES - CANOEING
Nature-lovers, discover the magic of the mangroves with a Gumbo Limbo guide on a canoe paddle along the Intracoastal Waterway. Must be experienced at canoeing and be able to get into and out of a canoe without assistance. 2-3 people per canoe.
- Ages 6-adult; children under 18 must sign-up and participate with an adult.
- Saturdays; May 18, 10:00-11:30 am; June 22, 1:30-3:00 pm
- Cost per person: Member $15, Non-member $22
- Reservations required.
- Subject to cancellation due to bad weather.

INTRACOASTAL ADVENTURES - KAYAKING
Beautiful scenery, fresh air, and exercise! Join us for a kayak tour as we learn about the fascinating wildlife that calls the Intracoastal home. Must have kayaking experience and be able to get in and out of a kayak without assistance. 1-2 people per double kayak.
- Ages 6-adult; children under 18 must sign-up and participate with an adult.
- Sundays; May 19, June 16, 9:00-11:00 am
- Saturday, June 15, 9:00-11:00 am
- Cost per person: Member $20, Non-member $30
- Reservations required.
- Subject to cancellation due to bad weather.

GUIDED NATURE WALK
Join us for a FREE guided walk along the Ashley Trail, a quarter-mile natural trail that winds through the butterfly garden, coastal hammock, and mangroves, to a sandy beach by the Intracoastal. Observe local flora and fauna as your naturalist guides you on this island exploration. Meet on the front porch of the center.
- All ages; children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.
- Tuesdays and Thursdays
- 11:00 am-12:00 pm
- Subject to cancellation due to bad weather.
Nature Program Information

INTRACOASTAL ADVENTURES - STAND UP PADDLE BOARDING (SUP)
A whole new way to see the Intracoastal! Stand up paddling makes it easier to see into the water below. Join us for a fun paddle along the mangroves as we look for fish, turtles, and manatees!
• Ages 12-adult; children under 18 must sign-up and participate with an adult.
• Sundays; May 12, June 9; 9:00-11:00 am
• Saturday, May 25, 9:00-11:00 am
• Cost per person: Member $20, Non-member $30
• Reservations required.
• Subject to cancellation due to bad weather.

LITTLE WONDERS
Join us for stories, laughter, and fun, as we learn about everything under the sun! Gumbo Limbo, a great place to explore; aquariums, trails, gardens, and so much more! Make a craft, meet an animal, take in the scene; come back every month for a brand new theme!
• Ages 3-4 with an adult (no charge for adult).
• Saturdays; May 4, June 1; 10:00-11:00 am
• Cost per child: Member $5, Non-member $8
• Reservations recommended.

NATURE DETECTIVES
"Why’s the sky blue? Why are plants green? What’s inside an egg? What does it all mean?" There is no end to a child’s questions! Become a nature detective with your novice naturalist as we investigate the mysteries of the world around us.
• Ages 5-7 with an adult (no charge for adult).
• Saturdays; May 4, June 1; 11:30-12:30 pm
• Cost per child: Member $5, Non-member $8
• Reservations recommended.

OUTDOOR MARINE AQUARIUM FEEDING
What is the connection between mangrove and coral reef communities? How do fish use these habitats? Learn about the fascinating behaviors of native fish, stingrays, and other marine life during these free presentations. Meet at the outdoor marine aquariums.
• All ages; children under 18 must participate with an adult.
• Daily at 12:30 pm
• Subject to cancellation due to bad weather.

S’MORE SCIENCE
Join us for this fun campfire program in our garden amphitheater with a yummy treat.
• All ages; children under 18 must sign-up and participate with an adult.
• Sundays; May 26, June 23; 5:00-6:00 pm
• Cost per person: Member $3, Non-member $5
• Reservations required.
• Subject to cancellation due to bad weather.

SEA TURTLE TALK
Get the inside scoop on our Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Facility. Last year, over 100 sea turtle patients were treated at Gumbo Limbo. Meet some of our current patients and hear their stories. Why are they here? What can you do to help? Meet in the Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Facility.
• All ages; children under 18 must participate with an adult.
• Daily at 2:00 pm
• Subject to cancellation due to bad weather.

SEINING THE LAGOON
Wading in the Intracoastal Waterway just behind Gumbo Limbo, we catch (and release) fish, shrimp, crabs, and more! With hand-held dip nets and large seine nets, get up close and personal with our local marine life. Closed toed shoes required (old sneakers or water shoes; no sandals). Bring a change of clothes & towel.
• Ages 10-adult; children under 18 must sign-up and participate with an adult.
• Saturdays; May 11, June 8; 10:00-11:30 pm
• Cost per person: Member $7, Non-member $10
• Reservations required.
• Subject to cancellation due to bad weather.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAQs</th>
<th>Turtle Walk</th>
<th>Hatchling Release</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is a...?</td>
<td>Our adventure starts in our classroom learning about the sea turtles we find nesting in Florida. Then, venture out for a walk along the beach...and the chance to see a nesting turtle!</td>
<td>An exciting and unique program about sea turtles beginning in our classroom, followed by a trip to the beach to watch Gumbo Limbo staff release baby sea turtles into the ocean!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there age limits?</td>
<td>Children must be at least 8 years old for Turtle Walks. Minors under the age of 18 must attend with an adult.</td>
<td>Hatchling Releases are for all ages. Minors under the age of 18 must attend with an adult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When do the programs occur?</td>
<td>Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings from June 3-July 10. The program begins at 8:45 pm and ends after one loggerhead turtle is seen <strong>(not guaranteed)</strong>, or at 12:00 am, whichever occurs first. Doors open at 8:30 pm for check-in.</td>
<td>Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings: July 15-August 8, 8:00–9:30 pm August 12-September 5, 7:30–9:00 pm (no program September 2) Doors open 15 minutes before the start time listed above for check-in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When can I make reservations?</td>
<td>Reservations are currently being accepted.</td>
<td>Members-Only Reservations begin at 9:00 am on May 13, 2019. General Reservations begin at 9:00 am on May 20, 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much are reservations?</td>
<td>$10 each for Members-Only Reservations, $17 each for General Reservations; plus Eventbrite service fees.</td>
<td>$10 each for Members-Only Reservations $17 each for General Reservations; plus Eventbrite service fees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many reservations can I make?</td>
<td>General Reservations: 6 Individual Memberships: 2 Family Memberships: 6 Donor/Contributor Memberships: 10 Members will receive a unique, one time use access code. Members may purchase additional reservations during General Reservations (General Reservations price and limits apply).</td>
<td>General Reservations: 6 Individual Memberships: 2 Family Memberships: 6 Donor/Contributor Memberships: 10 Members will receive a unique, one time use access code. Members may purchase additional reservations during General Reservations (General Reservations price and limits apply).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Gumbo Limbo’s Volunteer of the Month Program is designed to recognize Volunteers who go above and beyond their assigned or expected duties. These volunteers have made a significant contribution to Gumbo Limbo Nature Center through their dedication and service. They have donated their time, talents, and energy, and share a common goal of inspiring generations to learn and experience nature through observation and education. Volunteers are nominated and selected by Gumbo Limbo staff.

Pam VanVliet was selected for Gumbo Limbo’s volunteer of the month in January. Pam is our most dedicated education volunteer and is always willing to lend a hand with school groups, programs, special events, or whatever needs to be done. In the last month, Pam has also helped lead guided tours for our school groups. She is wonderful with children and indispensable to our education team.

Start date: July 2016  
Hours volunteered in January: 9.5
What is your favorite part of volunteering at Gumbo Limbo? “I love working with the students who come to Gumbo Limbo for field trips or camps. The science educators do such a fantastic job of passing on their knowledge and enthusiasm for conservation of marine life and their habitats. I can see the empathy the children have for the animals they meet and the determination they exhibit to care for our environment”

What is the most interesting thing that you’ve learned since starting at Gumbo Limbo? “The most interesting thing(s) I’ve learned are the details and facts about marine life, especially sea turtles. I am able to explain important facts about our marine life to the visitors as well as answer questions intelligently. I don’t claim to be an expert, but I know so much more now than I did before I came to Gumbo Limbo, thanks to the willingness of the staff to share and answer questions.”

What is one example of something you do/ someone can do to conserve the environment? “I have stopped using plastic products whenever and wherever I am able to do so. I refuse bags, bottles, straws, take out trays, food containers and I speak up about why I am refusing these items. I look at the product packaging before I buy and, if it is plastic, I ask to have the items removed from the container. This is something I advocate everyone to do.”

Temple Bray is the February volunteer of the month. Temple is a new volunteer but has been extremely dedicated and helpful since she started in December. She volunteers in multiple departments including at the aquariums, at the welcome desk, and with school programs. She also helped at an outreach event this month. Temple is friendly, positive, and enthusiastic. She always has a smile on her face and has received multiple guest and staff compliments.

Start date: December 2018  
Hours volunteered in February: 21.0
What is your favorite part of volunteering at Gumbo Limbo? “My favorite part of volunteering at Gumbo Limbo is living in my passion. I want to become a marine biologist who specializes with sea turtles, so biking here every Monday is one step closer to living my dream.”

What is the most interesting thing that you’ve learned since starting at Gumbo Limbo? “I love how the other volunteers are so sweet like Mary Lou, Sharon, David, etc. I love learning something new about each fish and now I know the names which makes me feel great!”

What is one example of something you do/ someone can do to conserve the environment? “GET RID OF/STOP USAGE OF PLASTIC STRAWS! I usually turn down straws that are plastic when I go out to eat and usually don’t use plastic cups either. “Plastic only gets smaller and smaller, never disappears.”
You Can Support Gumbo Limbo!
www.gumbolimbo.org/Contribute

Sea Coast Toast
APRIL 27 - MAY 8, 2019

If you love our Sea Coast Toast event,
(but don't want to attend another fancy gala)
you're in luck!

There is still time to donate and "attend" the auction. All "ticket" purchases are 100% tax deductible. Visit the website to find out more:

www.GumboLimbo.org/SeaCoastToast

GIFT SHOP
Gumbo Limbo's gift shop offers something for everyone, such as reusable bottles and straws, reef-safe sunscreens, books, jewelry, toys, and so much more!

Gift certificates are available.

And don't forget, Friends of Gumbo Limbo members receive a 10% discount off of everything in store.

Net proceeds go directly to support the operation and mission of Gumbo Limbo Nature Center.

PAVE THE WAY
An engraved paver at Gumbo Limbo is a personalized way to show your support for our mission.

ONE PAVER $150 EACH
TWO PAVERS $135 EACH
THREE PAVERS $125 EACH
Because the olive ridley sea turtle is rare in the United States, FWC requested that our rehabilitation staff preserve the shell and skull of the turtle. Preserving sea turtle specimens can be time consuming and challenging. Long hours of preparation are required to clean and restore their natural beauty before becoming part of a scientific collection. First, the shell and skull are scrubbed clean to remove dirt and debris. Then, tissues are manually removed. The shell is filled with a special salt mixture to dry out any remaining tissue, and left to sit for several weeks. The skull was then sent to a lab to be cleaned by Dermestid beetles which removed all remaining tissues. Hydrogen peroxide is also used to remove any final residue from the skull and bleach it white for final presentation. Once fully prepared, the shell and skull are both coated with multiple thin layers of polyurethane to protect the surfaces.

The entire preservation process has taken over three months to complete. Final preserved specimens will be donated to FWC as the first olive ridley specimens in their sea turtle artifact collection. These specimens will be used in training and educational programs around the State of Florida. Although it is always disheartening when one of our sea turtle patients dies, we learn as much as we can from every loss. The preserved specimens of our olive ridley patient will serve as valuable scientific tools for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for many years to come.
FRIENDS OF GUMBO LIMBO MEMBERSHIP

- 10% discount in the gift shop
- First opportunity to make reservations for the Turtle Walk and Hatchling Release programs (limits apply)
- Discounts on select programs
- Support Nature Center operations, programs, and exhibits
- Free or discounted admission to over 160 nature centers in the USA and Canada www.natctr.org

One Year Membership to

Friends of Gumbo Limbo

____ Individual - $25
____ Family - $50
____ Contributor - $100 or more
____ Donor - $500 or more
____ Benefactor - $1000 or more
____ Other - $

With your Membership or gift you help us promote coastal and marine education, conservation, and research today and into the future. Your gift will be a lasting tribute to you, your family, and our community.

Friends of Gumbo Limbo is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

Name

Address

City State Zip

Phone Number

Email Address

To pay by credit card or complete online, please visit our website, www.gumbolimbo.org/membership.