



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is Sea Turtle Conservancy?**

Sea Turtle Conservancy (STC) is the oldest sea turtle conservation organization in the world. In 2009, STC celebrated 50 years of dedication to the study and protection of marine turtles and their habitats. STC's research and education programs are providing pertinent biological information about sea turtles and are increasing awareness about threats to sea turtle survival. These conservation efforts are helping to recover important sea turtle populations, particularly in the Caribbean, Atlantic and Pacific. STC also engages in policy issues that affect sea turtle population in coastal, nearshore and marine habitats, with a focus on protecting nesting habitats and oceanic migratory routes. Sea Turtle Conservancy is based in Gainesville, Florida, with offices in Melbourne Beach, Florida; Washington, D.C.; San Jose, Costa Rica; and Bocas del Toro, Panama.

### **What is the mission of Sea Turtle Conservancy?**

It is the mission of Sea Turtle Conservancy to ensure the survival of sea turtles within the Caribbean, Atlantic and Pacific through research, education, training, advocacy and protection of the natural habitats upon which they depend.

### **Why sea turtles?**

Sea Turtle Conservancy focuses on sea turtles because these ancient reptiles are important indicators of the health of the world's marine and coastal ecosystems. If sea turtles become extinct, the ecological repercussions are considerable. Sea turtles are one of the few animals that eat seagrasses, which helps maintain the health of seagrass ecosystems. Seagrass beds are important breeding and developmental grounds for juvenile sea turtles and many species of fish, shellfish and crustaceans. On the beach, sea turtle eggs provide nutrients for stronger and healthier dune vegetation. Stronger vegetation and root systems help to hold the sand in place and prevent beach erosion. Though STC is primarily focused on sea turtles, the group's initiatives benefit many forms of marine life and diverse coastal habitats.

### **When did Sea Turtle Conservancy begin?**

In the early 1950s, University of Florida graduate research professor Dr. Archie Carr began studying sea turtles. The history of STC is forever intertwined with the life and accomplishments of Dr. Archie Carr. Through his research, teaching and writing, Dr. Carr is responsible for accumulating and distributing much of what is known about the biology and lifecycle of sea turtles. In 1956, Dr. Carr published an award-winning book, *The Windward Road*, which first alerted the world to the plight of sea turtles. This book led to the creation of the "Brotherhood of the Green Turtle," a group dedicated to supporting sea turtle conservation. With the guidance of John H. Phipps, a friend and benefactor of Dr. Carr, the Brotherhood was incorporated as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization under a new name, Caribbean Conservation Corporation. In 2010, the organization formally changed its name to Sea Turtle Conservancy.



### **Why did the organization change its name?**

Caribbean Conservation Corporation changed its name to Sea Turtle Conservancy to better reflect the expanding goals of the organization. As Sea Turtle Conservancy, the organization's mission to solely protect sea turtles and their habitats is more prominently highlighted and helps communicate this singular purpose to supporters. Sea Turtle Conservancy is also focused on expanding geographically beyond the Caribbean and Atlantic, and the new name is universal in scope. To honor the rich history of Sea Turtle Conservancy, the tribal turtle logo will remain an integral part of the organization and continue to feature the acronym "CCC" inside the turtle's shell.

### **How can people get involved?**

There are many opportunities to get involved. Sea Turtle Conservancy accepts donations from anyone wishing to contribute. STC also offers a membership program where you can join the organization through a financial contribution. The Adopt-a-Turtle program allows people to support specific turtle being tracked using satellite-tracking technology. The Eco-Volunteer Adventure program in Tortuguero, Costa Rica, is a way to get engaged in hands-on sea turtle research and monitoring. Companies can also get involved by becoming business sponsors or through in-kind donations to support conservation and education efforts. Sponsorships also are available to businesses and individuals for specific programs and activities, including annual Tour de Turtles migration tracking event. To learn more about getting involved, visit STC's website at [www.conserveturtles.org](http://www.conserveturtles.org).