SEA TURTLE REPORT

Sea Turtle Hazard – Discarded Cast Nets on Beach

By Maria Lamb

"A fishing license is required to use a cast net in Florida according to Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and anyone using a cast net for fishing must have a valid fishing license."

Bait cast nets made of fine monofilament. It's a type of fishing net that is thrown or cast by hand to catch bait fish from shore. According to the Marine Debris Program for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Marine Debris Program, "entanglement of wildlife is a global problem that affects hundreds of species such as sea turtles, birds and fish. When animals are caught in marine debris such as nettings, it can be difficult to swim and feed, fishing lines can cut into their bodies and potentially lead to death."



Discarded Cast Nets on the Beach. According to FWC, anyone using a cast nest for fishing must have a valid fishing license.



Photo by FWC

According to the Sea Turtle Activity Report for July 16-22nd, Marco had 10 hatched nests and seven Disoriented Nests.



Photos by Maria Lamb

A posted sea turtle nest competes for space with beach vendors' umbrellas and chairs.

It is Sea Turtle Hatchling Time – this is when the sea turtle eggs hatch and baby sea turtles head out to the open water during the evening hours. According to experts, these amazing creatures have roamed the earth unchanged for some 110 million years and hone back to their birth beach some 20 to 30 years after their birth in one of those mysteries of nature!



Kim Nussbaum, a concerned beach walker, shared this photo of a hole left unfilled on the beach along with a red shovel. Last Wednesday, six large holes were counted from Residents Beach to South Beach. These holes are hazards to hatchlings trying to get to open water and also to unsuspecting beach walkers.

Sea Turtle Activity Update July 16 - 22, 2024

Beach	Nests		False Crawls		Hatched Nests		
	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	Disoriented
Barefoot	215	239	181	480	40	57	7
Delnor Wiggins	55	56	73	157	12	11	0
Vanderbilt	212	320	191	422	48	65	6
Parkshore	207	207	174	371	26	23	3
City of Naples	242	316	273	381	33	40	3
Keewaydin Is.	385	467	628	841	42	72	0
Sea Oat Island	10	29	17	81	0	3	0
Marco Island	93	108	228	409	10	13	7
Kice and Cape Romano	127	148	182	256	10	5	0
10,000 Islands	123	112	133	170	22	12	0
Collier County Totals	1669	2002	2080	3578	243	301	26

To report dead, injured or disoriented sea turtles on Marco call 239-289-9736 or 239-289-9687

Destigmatizing Mental Health

Covid-19 Catalyst for Conversations

By Sophia Lowrie

There's no doubt that Covid-19 brought seismic shifts to everyday life for everyone and how we operate as a global society. Mental health issues are not new, but the Covid-19 pandemic rapidly accelerated the depth and amplitude of the problems we face. In 2019, before the pandemic, according to the United Nations, one in five adults in the United States experienced mental illness, most often depression or anxiety, and half of Americans were expected to confront a mental health issue during their lifetime. Today those numbers are dramatically higher, with some studies showing that as many as 80% of Americans are struggling with anxiety, depression, grief, or isolation. This is not surprising, given how Covid-19 wreaked havoc on our "new normal," leaving a trail of devastation and grief across the globe.

While Covid-19 most likely contributed to the prevalence of mental health issues, it also spurred positive momentum in our communities to raise awareness and improve access to essential support and affordable mental health services. The pandemic expedited long-standing efforts within the professional mental health and physical healthcare communities to destigmatize mental health issues and normalize seeking help for these problems. Across diverse communities and industries, more open conversations have been emerging about how people are feeling, the challenges they face, and the resources they use to manage these concerns. Public perceptions of mental illness are becoming more empathetic and compassionate, and discussions about the issue are becoming more frequent, open, and inclusive, especially among younger populations.



Submitted Photo

The pandemic has significantly accelerated the growth of teletherapy options, greatly expanding widespread access to mental health services. In early 2020, many healthcare industries swiftly transitioned from in-person to online care. This immediate shift spurred rapid innovation in virtual therapy, resulting in successful interactions between patients and providers, improved quality of available platforms and mental health services, and increased investment in new technologies and platforms for mental healthcare. While many are now returning to in-person care, telehealth has remained a crucial medium for reaching new groups of people seeking help and those who utilize telehealth as their preferred method of receiving therapy or mental healthcare. Telehealth enables patients to receive medical care through video calls, online chat, or phone consultations. This virtual visit option enhances patients' access to professional healthcare services in a more convenient manner.

Since the onset of the pandemic, there has been a significant transformation in the perception of mental health and the encouragement for individuals to seek professional assistance when needed. This change has also led to positive developments in the workplace, where people spend a substantial portion of their time. Employers have become increasingly cognizant of the impact of stress on their employees and the importance of protecting mental health. Employers provided telephone hotlines for individuals experiencing heightened anxiety or depression to access immediate support. Following the peak of the pandemic, many companies and workplaces are continuing to offer their employees resources for mental health and the option to work from home.

Before Covid, people often kept their mental health struggles private due to the stigma around discussing such issues. With the pandemic, remote work and virtual check-ins became more common, and questions like "how are you coping today?" normalized conversations about emotional well-being. Additionally, the pandemic has underscored the disparities in mental health care and revealed the ongoing challenges in providing adequate support to underserved groups, including people of color and those who identify as LGBTQ+. The shared experience of isolation made it more acceptable to admit to and discuss mental health challenges.

