

Before Observing Sea Turtles

～The current situation of sea turtles～

Sea turtles visit Kurio Beach **from late April to early August**. The newborn hatchlings leave the beach **from early June to late September**.

● Sea Turtles, An Endangered Species

Sea turtles are one of the few reptiles living in the ocean. There are 7 subspecies throughout the world and three of them, Loggerhead Turtles (EN), Green Turtles (VU) and Hawksbill Turtles (EN), come to lay their eggs in Japan. These are listed in the Japanese Red Lists and all species of sea turtles are listed in CITES, Appendix I (the most endangered among CITES list). *CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) : generally known as the Washington Convention

● Problems Facing Sea Turtles

The number of sea turtles landing in Japan is decreasing. It is said that sea turtles are close to being extinct.

Nesting sea turtles are **very cautious** and **easily disturbed by artificial lights**. If there are bright lights on the beach, they may prevent sea turtles from landing on the beach. Hatchlings are strongly attracted to the lights and may instinctively move toward it. It can confuse them making it difficult for them to reach the ocean.

● To Protect Sea Turtles

After reaching a peak in 1991, the number of sea turtles landing on Yakushima has been decreasing. However, the number of visitors to see sea turtles has been increasing, as a result, the sea turtle nesting and hatching ecosystem on Yakushima has been severely affected.

The Rules for Protecting & Observing Sea Turtles on Kurio Beach (see on the back sheet) was set up by relevant administrative organs and concerned islanders to protect the sea turtles. Disturbing sea turtles or collecting their eggs are prohibited by laws/ordinances such as the Ordinance for the Protection of Sea Turtles (Kagoshima Prefecture).

In order to keep the precious ecosystem on Kurio Beach for future generations, please follow the Rules for Protecting & Observing Sea Turtles on Kurio Beach, and observe all relative laws/ordinances.



The Rules for Protecting & Observing Sea Turtles on Kurio Beach

- Let's quietly and calmly watch over the sea turtles nesting and hatching -

The people involved in conservation activities on Kurio Beach are deeply concerned of the endangered sea turtles coming to lay their eggs on Kurio Beach and they would also like the visitors to have a wonderful experience of seeing sea turtles. We would greatly appreciate you following the rules below for the safety of sea turtles nesting and hatchlings.

● Observing Rules - NIGHTTIME -

- (1) The observation time is not allowed to exceed **23:00**. (so as not to disturb the Kurio residents.)
- (2) Parking on roads around Kurio Beach is prohibited. Please park in the designated parking area.
- (3) Car lights will disturb the sea turtles, so please drive with low beams around the beach.
- (4) Please do not enter the beach indiscriminately. Follow all instructions from Sea Turtle Rangers who will have a ranger's certificate.
- (5) Before entering the beach, please **receive the explanation of the basic rules for observing sea turtles** from a Sea Turtle Ranger.
- (6) Please do not enter sea walls, or fishing port facility from the beach zone without permission.
- (7) Alcoholic beverages are strictly prohibited. (**You may not be allowed to participate in the observation, if you are under the influence of alcohol.**)
- (8) Smoking is not allowed on the beach.
- (9) Keep quiet and calm on the beach. Do not walk on the beach indiscriminately and do not turn on any lights.
- (10) Taking videos and pictures are prohibited.

● Observing Rules - 24 HOURS -

- (1) Camping, bonfires, and fireworks on the beach are prohibited.
- (2) Please do not take any sand.
- (3) All trash brought in should be taken out.
- (4) Do not touch the sea turtles.

Disturbing sea turtles or collecting their eggs without permission is punishable by imprisonment up to 6 months or a fine of up to 300,000 yen.

● Cautions - when visiting Kurio Beach at night time



If you driving the area around Kurio Beach at night, please drive slowly with low beams.

Please turn the headlights off at the Kurio Beach parking lot.

- Inquiry - Regional Promotion Unit, Tourism & Community Development Section, Yakushima Town Office (Weekdays: 08:30~17:15 Saturdays, Sundays, and public holidays: closed)

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