

## Charlotte County Dog Parks

- Edgewater Paw Park  
22410 Glass Lane  
Charlotte Harbor
- Ann & Chuck Dever Regional Park  
6791 San Casa Drive  
Englewood

**Dog-Friendly Parks** with designated areas open for walking your dog on a leash are:

- Bayshore Live Oak Park  
23157 Bayshore Road  
Port Charlotte
- Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Park  
1688 Gasparilla Road  
Rotonda
- Centennial Park  
1185 Centennial Boulevard  
Port Charlotte
- Ollie's Pond Park  
18235 Avon Avenue  
Port Charlotte
- Port Charlotte Beach Park  
4500 Harbor Boulevard  
Port Charlotte
- Randy Spence Park  
4333 Kerrigan Circle  
Port Charlotte

## Closest Dog Beach-Sarasota County

- Paw Park  
1600 S. Harbor Drive  
Venice

**If you have any questions please contact:**  
Charlotte County Parks and Natural Resources  
1120 Centennial Blvd ort Charlotte, FL 33953  
941-613-3220

**Remember it's against the law to allow dogs to harass wildlife on Florida beaches (68A-27 FAC)**

### Here Is How YOU Can Help:

- Obey local and State Park rules on beaches closed to pets. **No dogs are allowed on Charlotte County and Florida State Park beaches. Dogs must be on a leash in all other authorized locations unless otherwise specifically designated and posted. (CC Ord. No. 98-070 Section 1-4-31, CC Ord. 2019-029, & 62D-2.014 FAC)**

### To Best Protect Wildlife:

- **Leave dogs at home when you go to the beach.** If you must bring your dog only go where authorized, follow the leash law and pick up and properly dispose of all pet waste.
- Keep out of posted (roped/flagged) beach areas and dunes. **Dogs are perceived as a threat to birds and will disturb them.**
- **Keep your dog as far away from wildlife as possible.** Do not allow dogs to disturb or chase birds or dig holes, which could damage turtle nest or trap both turtle and shorebird hatchlings.
- Avoid walking your dog on the beach at night during the sea turtle nesting season (May 1st-October 31st)
- If you see dogs disturbing wildlife **REPORT IT** to the FWC Wildlife Hotline:

**888-404-FWCC(3922) or \*FWC on cell phone or text [Tip@MyFWC.com](mailto:Tip@MyFWC.com)**

**For more information visit [MyFWC.com/conservation/you-conserve/wildlife/](http://MyFWC.com/conservation/you-conserve/wildlife/)**

## Beach Nesting Species: Facing trouble with the presence of dogs



*Person walking dog flushes resting birds*



*Dog prints and disturbance of active sea turtle*



**CHARLOTTE COUNTY**  
Parks & Natural Resources



## BEACH NESTING SPECIES

Shorebirds and Seabirds nest directly on the sand from February 15th to August 31st. Adult birds, eggs, and chicks are nearly invisible against the sand and shells. Their camouflage protects them from predators and helps them to survive on the beach. When disturbed and flushed off their nests by people or dogs, the eggs and chicks are exposed to temperature extremes and predation. They are also at risk of being trampled on by unsuspecting beach goers.



*Two least tern chicks huddle together in their nest.*

Temporary staking, roping, and signage around shorebird areas on the beach provide beach nesting birds a safe buffer zone to nest and raise their young. This also brings awareness to the public that beach nesting birds are present. Protection of nesting areas is critical because it limits disturbances to the adult birds, eggs, and chicks. Temporary staking and flagging is also used to mark the location and provide protection to sea turtle nests which are buried below the sand surface.

Sea Turtles come ashore at night and lay their eggs in the sand from May 1st to October 31st. When approaching the beach to nest, females are very sensitive to their surroundings and will abandon their nesting attempts if they feel threatened. When a nest has been laid it must incubate 45 to 60 days before hatching. **Only 1 in 1000 hatchlings survive to adulthood** because sea turtle eggs and hatchlings are highly vulnerable to predation.

**One of the greatest challenges that Florida's beach nesting species face is the presence of dogs on our beaches.** To shorebirds and sea turtles, domestic dogs are predators just as a crow, raccoon, or coyote. In turn, dogs naturally see them as a source of prey or as something new to investigate. Even curious innocent encounters are dangerous for the beach nesters and often lead to colonies and nests being abandoned due to fear.



*Above and to right are two cases of predation by dogs as evidenced by footprints*

## ARE DOGS THREATENING THE BREEDING POPULATIONS OF FLORIDA'S BEACH NESTING SPECIES?

In recent years there has been a downward trend of beach nesting Shorebirds in Charlotte County. (see graph below) Similar downward trends have been seen in beach nesting Seabird populations. Our numbers of least tern colonies have reduced from 8 nesting sites in 2013 to only 3 successful colonies in 2020. In correlation, 2013 had the lowest amount of documented sightings of dogs on our beaches.

