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Coasting along Brevard County beaches

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By [Tyme](#)

Posted: 5/27/2007 1:37:40 PM

Cape Canaveral beach is a blast

Much of the City of Cape Canaveral's beach is developed and publicly accessible through beach access sites, as well as beach parks such as Cherie Down Park.

However, there is one unique section of beach off limits to the public: Cape Canaveral Air Force Station beach. The beach is maintained by the 45th Space Wing of the U.S. Air Force, and is accessible only by base personnel.

An unusual site on this beach is Space Launch Complex 37, just behind the dunes, which is used to launch the Delta IV rockets.

This pristine, undeveloped beach is home to vegetation and wildlife found no where else. A number of endangered species, including the rare leatherback sea turtles - the largest in the world today, rely on the beach for nesting.



They have rights too

One such rare species is the Southeastern Beach Mouse. "Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Kennedy Space Center, and the Canaveral National Seashore are pretty much all that's left of them and their habitat, due to coastal development over the years," said Don George, a biologist for the U.S. Air Force.

The U.S. Air Force will partner with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission to relocate some beach mice from the Cape to the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge in South Brevard, to help re-establish the population there.

Another example of how the 45th Space Wing provides leadership in preserving threatened and endangered species is with sea turtles.

Videos: Brevard beaches

[Download QuickTime 7 Player](#) (free)
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Brevard beaches: Intro (Runtime: 1:30)
[View area: [320x240](#) | [480x360](#) | [Flash8](#)]

Sebastian Inlet rocks (Runtime: 2:13)
[View area: [320x240](#) | [480x360](#) | [Flash8](#)]

I dream of Cocoa Beach (Runtime: 2:00)
[View area: [320x240](#) | [480x360](#) | [Flash8](#)]

Playalinda Beach is au naturale (2:00)
[View area: [320x240](#) | [480x360](#) | [Flash8](#)]

Beach parks abound (Runtime: 1:30)
[View area: [320x240](#) | [480x360](#) | [Flash8](#)]

People really dig the beach (Runtime: 0:45)
[View area: [320x240](#) | [480x360](#) | [Flash8](#)]

**Have beach, will travel:
Vacationers' views** (Runtime: 3:20)
[View area: [320x240](#) | [480x360](#) | [Flash8](#)]

Cape Canaveral Lighthouse shines (3:25)
[View area: [320x240](#) | [480x360](#) | [Flash8](#)]

Interview with biologist Don George, Cape Canaveral Air Force Station beach (4:30) [View area: [320x240](#) | [480x360](#) | [Flash8](#)]

A shout out to Cub Scout Pack 706 (1:20)
[View area: [320x240](#) | [480x360](#) | [Flash8](#)]

Videos produced, shot, and edited by [Tyme](#).

Turtleriffic

Describing a recent nest, George said: "The particular [leatherback] turtle that laid this nest was probably about 800 pounds and maybe six feet long. This is the second leatherback nest that we have had so far this year."

Adult leatherback turtles weigh from 700 to 1,500 pounds and measure four to eight feet in length. [Learn more about sea turtles.](#)



Other species common to the Cape are loggerhead and green turtles, also endangered sea turtles.

"Last year we had over 1,800 loggerhead nests on the Cape and over 50 green turtle nests," George said. "All summer long, a staff of eight monitors the 21 kilometers of beach every morning. A similar



program is in place at Patrick Air Force Base, with assistance from University of Central Florida."



[Watch the video interview.](#)

Marine turtles nest in Florida from May 1 through Oct. 31. Female turtles come ashore during darkness and lay 100-150 eggs per nest, and multiple nests of three to eight per season. After 45 to 70 days, the hatchlings emerge, wave good-bye to the beach, and head straight for the ocean -- navigating by the reflection of light on the water.

According to the county, the entire Brevard County coast from Port Canaveral to Sebastian Inlet is monitored daily until turtle nesting season ends. The county has strict rules about beach activity during turtle nesting. Consult the [Brevard County turtle nesting web page](#) for more information.

Turtle walks, don't run

While visitors are not allowed on the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station beach, they can learn more about sea turtles through one of the guided tours on other beaches.

"If you visit during June, July or August, call the Sea Turtle



Brevard County beaches lifeguard schedule

Guarded beaches include Cherie Down Park, Lori Wilson Park, Howard E. Futch Memorial Park, Spessard Holland north and south beach parks.

Spring and Summer

On Duty 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Weekends only: Mar. 24 to May 23




7 days per week: May 23 to Aug. 19

Weekends only: Aug. 25 to Oct. 28

Labor Day, Sep. 3

For more information, visit [Brevard County Fire Rescue Department's Ocean Lifeguard website.](#)

For county lifeguard information by phone:

- Cape Canaveral to Cocoa Beach
 321-868-1145
- Howard E. Futch to Melbourne Beach Boardwalk
 321-779-4008
- Ocean Avenue to Spessard Holland
 321-952-6370

Sebastian Inlet State Park

Memorial Day through Labor Day

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

7 days per week

Canaveral National Seashore (Playalinda Beach)


Memorial Day through Labor Day

6 a.m. - 8 p.m.

7 days per week

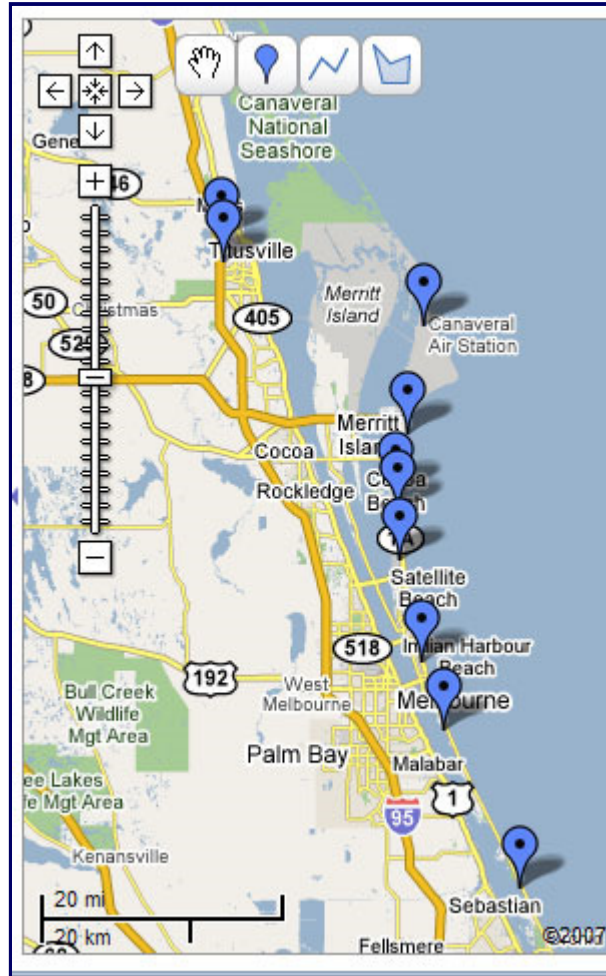
Web cameras and surf reports

- [Cocoa Beach Pier](#)
- [Cocoa Beach - Sandbar](#)
- [Cocoa Beach - Coconuts](#)
- [Cocoa Beach Skate Park](#)
- [Indialantic Boardwalk](#)
- [Spanish House](#)

Preservation Society ( 321-676-1701) in May and make reservations for a Turtle Walk," said Tom Bartosek of the Space Coast Office of Tourism. "These take place in the evening with a trained guide and you can really connect with nature and the female turtle during these events. If you haven't done it yet, you are missing out!"



- [Sebastian Inlet Movable](#)
- [Sebastian Inlet 1st Peak](#)



[Click map to view interactive Google Map of Brevard County Beaches.](#)

Brevard beach parks

North

[Playalinda Beach / Canaveral National Seashore](#)

Central

Central Park

[Alan Shepard Park*](#)

[Cherie Down Park*](#)

[Jetty Park*](#)

[Lori Wilson Park*](#)

[Robert P. Murkshe Memorial Park*](#)

[Sydney Fischer Park*](#)

South

[Bonsteel Park](#)

[Canova Beach Park*](#)

[Coconut Point Park*](#)

[Hightower Beach Park*](#)

[Howard E. Futch Memorial Park](#)

[Indialantic Beach](#)

[Millenium Park](#)

[Irene H. Canova Park](#)

[James H. Nance Sea Turtle Park](#)

[Juan Ponce de Leon Landing](#)

[Ocean Park](#)

[Pelican Beach Park](#)

[Richard G. Edgeton Bicentennial Park](#)

[S.P.R.A. Park*](#)

[Seagull Park*](#)

[Sebastian Inlet State Park*](#)

[Spessard Holland North Beach Park*](#)

[Spessard Holland South Beach Park*](#)

[Wave Crest Park](#)

* Parks with showers

[Beach access sites or dune crossovers](#)

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