



Wildlife Sense Kefalonia is a research-based sea turtle conservation project on the island of Kefalonia, Greece. Our primary focus is on sea turtle conservation, both through protecting sea turtle nests on some of the island's busiest beaches, and by monitoring and protecting the adult sea turtle population. Volunteer tasks range from daily morning patrols to locate and protect new nests, turtle identification and behavioural research surveys in areas where sea turtles swim and informing locals and visitors about the island's biodiversity. Hands-on learning is emphasized throughout the project, so that volunteers acquire practical experience on a wide range of wildlife research and conservation practices, including their legal and social aspects, which are often the most controversial aspects of conservation.



What to Expect

Most mornings will begin by either biking to the nesting beaches at sunrise to identify and record fresh sea turtle tracks and nests, or observing sea turtles from the Argostoli harbour to collect important behavioural data on the permanent sea turtle population that resides within the Bay of Argostoli. Some afternoons are spent on the beaches measuring beach length and slope gradient, which can change over the duration of one season and are important to nest site selection. However, if you have the afternoon off, you can take advantage of the beach in front of the accommodation and enjoy the sea. During some evenings we measure the light pollution along the nesting beaches, and conduct sea turtle tagging surveys and hatchling rescue.

Volunteers will gain valuable research experience, increase their knowledge in the field of conservation and improve interpersonal skills while exploring new places, experiencing a new culture and making lifetime friends. Most importantly volunteers will be helping preserve some of the unique and endangered wildlife of Kefalonia.

When to join us. Our research surveys begin in late May and continue to early October.

June and July are when the turtles begin nesting. You will spend most of your time identifying and protecting sea turtle nests. You'll also monitor the turtles in the harbour. If you prefer to come early in the season, when it is cooler, June is best. July is full summer in Kefalonia and very hot, but also a good time for swimming as the sea is warming up.



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August is when the first hatchlings emerge, but this usually doesn't happen until the middle of the month. Some turtles may still be nesting at the beginning of the month and you'll continue monitoring the turtles in the harbour. This is the hottest month with the highest tourism and the perfect time to snorkel.



September and early *October* are full of hatchlings and when we begin nest inventories. You will see hatchlings, perform inventories and continue to monitor the turtles in the harbour. It is cooler than the previous months with some rain, but more enjoyable for those that do not tolerate heat. Evenings are usually very good for swimming or snorkelling as the water is the warmest. At this time there are also many end of season or off season deals with local shops and touristic activities.



The volunteer cost is €480 for two weeks or €700 for four weeks. The cost will cover your accommodation and all cooking equipment, field research training, and use of bikes to get around the local area. It does not include travel costs to or from the island, travel insurance, food, or personal expenses.

Requirements

- 18 years of age or older
- Minimum stay of 2 weeks
- Comfortable riding a bicycle on hilly terrain
- Able to walk and bike during a hot day



Volunteers do not need to be biologists, but should be enthusiastic about conservation and committed to the cause. All volunteers are trained and tested on protocols and techniques to ensure quality data collection and the welfare of the turtles. Volunteers should be physically fit and must be able to ride a bicycle and walk on the sand during morning beach surveys. Volunteers should be comfortable partaking in a communal living situation with shared responsibilities. The minimum age is 18 and volunteers should be mature and independent.

What's Included:

- Accommodation while participating in the project
- Trained field leaders with 24-hour support
- Cookware and research equipment
- Transportation to and from the Kefalonian airport/bus station on project start and end dates

What's not Included:

- Flights and transport to the island
- Travel insurance
- Food
- Personal expenses

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