



# West Coast Sea Turtle Symposium 2024

## Community Connections in Conservation

November 5th-7th  
Living Coast Discovery Center  
Chula Vista, California

Hosts of the 2024 West Coast Sea Turtle Symposium



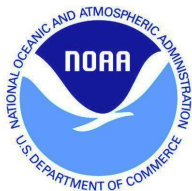
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**SAND CLOUD**



**UPWELL**





## **KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Serge Dedina, Executive Director of WILDCOAST**

(9:15 am November 6, 2024)

### ***Twenty Five Years of WILDCOAST Sea Turtle Conservation: A Legacy of Wallace J. Nichols***

Dr. Serge Dedina leads the international team at WILDCOAST, which he co-founded with Wallace J. Nichols in 2000. A former California State Parks Ocean Lifeguard, Serge was elected to two terms as Mayor of Imperial Beach, California from 2014-2022. Serge has worked on sea turtle conservation for 25 years including supporting the development of the Grupo Tortuguero de las Californias and innovative campaigns around reducing black market demand for sea turtle meat and eggs. WILDCOAST is currently supporting olive ridley and leatherback nesting beach protection at four sites in Oaxaca.

Serge's innovative coastal and ocean conservation work has been reported on by the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, NBC News, Washington Post, BBC, NPR, Wall Street Journal, and 60 Minutes among others. In recognition of his successful conservation endeavors, Serge received the Surf Industry's Environmental Award, San Diego Zoological Society's Conservation Medal as well as the California Coastal Commission's "Coastal Hero" Award. He was also named a UC San Diego John Muir Fellow and honored as a Peter Benchley "Hero of the Sea." The author of *Saving the Gray Whale*, *Wild Sea*, and *Surfing the Border*, Serge holds a B.A. in Political Science from UC San Diego, a M.S. in Geography from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and a Ph.D in Geography from the University of Texas at Austin.

## Day 1- NOVEMBER 5, 2024 Necropsy Demonstration

9:00 – 1:00 Led by Erin LaCasella and Heather Harris at NOAA-Southwest Fisheries Science Center

## Day 2- NOVEMBER 6, 2024 Oral Presentations and Workshop #1

9:00 – 9:15 Opening Remarks: Aiyana Reissman (SoCal Sea Turtles)

9:15 – 10:00 Keynote Address: Serge Dedina (WILD COAST)

10:00–11:00 Session #1: (Session Chair: Christina Fahy)

**Robin LeRoux** (NOAA SWFSC), Erin LaCasella, Calandra Turner-Tomaszewicz, Garrett Lemons, Andrew Maurer, Tomoharu Eguchi, Peter Dutton, Justin Greenman, Lynn Massey, Dan Lawson, Christina Fahy, and Jeffrey Seminoff: *Turtles in the city: Using multiple data sources to reveal green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) occurrence in urban habitats of Southern California, USA*

**Calandra N. Turner Tomaszewicz** (NOAA Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC)), Lynn Massey, Jason Askri, and Jeffrey Seminoff: *Community-based reporting informs movement and distribution of sea turtles*

**Andrew S. Maurer** (NOAA SWFSC), Tomo Eguchi, Garrett E. Lemons, Robin A. LeRoux, Erin L. LaCasella, Calandra N. Turner Tomaszewicz, Megan E. Hanna, Jessica Curran, Bryant Chesney, Sheila V. Madrak, and Jeffrey A. Seminoff: *Patterns in habitat use by green turtles in San Diego Bay*

**Peter Dutton** (NOAA SWFSC): *History of San Diego Bay green turtle research and introduction to Panel Discussion: 50 years of questions and discoveries*

11:00 - 11:15 **Coffee Break**

11:15 - 12:00 **Panel Discussion:** Past, current and future perspectives on San Diego Bay sea turtle research and management reflected by a community

of students, scientists, managers and citizens in a growing urban environment. Led by Peter Dutton (NOAA SWFSC)

**12:00 – 1:30 Lunch & Poster Session** Speak with poster presenters in the main gallery.

**1:30 – 3:00 Workshop #1: Collaborative Perspectives: Behavior Change Tools for Effective Marine Conservation Outreach**

**Organizers:** Rachel Smith (Human Nature Connection), Sabrina Mashburn (SoCal Sea Turtles), and Aiyana Reissman (SoCal Sea Turtles)

**Description:** Learn how to convey sea turtle science and conservation messages with key audiences to produce positive outcomes for sea turtles and the human communities that live alongside them. This workshop will allow us to share outreach and education ideas with our peers, while practicing techniques for effective communication through human behavior-oriented messaging accessible to all audiences!

**3:00 – 3:15 Coffee Break**

**3:00 – 3:45 \*OPTIONAL\* Blue Walk** led by Suzie Graham (Natural Intelligence Project)  
A guided experience along the water to connect with the ocean and explore our bond with marine life. This session invites reflection and a fresh perspective on natural beauty.

**3:15 – 4:15 Session #2 (Session Chair: Jenna Contuchio)**

**Jeni Smith** and **Jennifer Zarate** (SeaWorld San Diego): *Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release of Sea Turtles*

**Heather Harris** (Upwell), Erin LaCasella, Brian Stacy, Scott Benson, Jeffrey Seminoff, Michelle Zwartjes, Emeline McMann-Chapman, Todd Schmitt, Lance Adams, Michael Murray, Cara Field, Padraig Duignan, Jim Rice, Jim Burke, Michelle Rivard, Caitlin Hadfield, Martin Haulena, Stephen Raverty, and George Shillinger: *Health investigations of U.S. West Coast sea turtles*

**Justin Greenman** (NOAA WCR) and **Dawn Nygren-Burkert** (Aquarium of the Pacific (AOP)): *Upper San Gabriel River turtle update: How we got here, what's happening now, and what's next?*

**Anabel Tovalin** (AOP): *Sea turtle monitoring at the San Gabriel River and Coyote Creek in Southern California*

**4:15**      **Closing Remarks for Day 1 - Aiyana Reissman**

## **Day 3**      **NOVEMBER 7, 2024**      **Oral Presentations and Workshop #2**

**9:00 – 9:15**      **Opening Remarks: Aiyana Reissman**

**9:15 – 10:45**      **Session #3 (Session Chair: Eduardo Cuevas)**

**George Shillinger** (Upwell) and Scott Benson: *Leatherback research in central California and the Pacific Northwest*

**Robert T. Gammariello** (Marine Research Group), Sabrina C. Sorace, Jahsendi J. Simmonds, Dante Trivett, Claudia D. Lombard, Kelly R. Stewart, and Stephen G. Dunbar: *A hawksbill's least favorite color: what does physiology have to do with conservation*

**Garrett E. Lemons** (NOAA SWFSC), Alexi C. Besser, Jeffrey A. Seminoff, and Seth D. Newsome: *Optimal specialization of foraging East Pacific green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*): Insights from  $\delta^{13}C$  analysis of essential amino acids*

**Justin Greenman** and Christina Fahy (NOAA WCR): *West Coast Region stranding network update*

**Erin L. LaCasella** (NOAA SWFSC), Robin LeRoux, Heather Harris, Brian Stacy, Justin Greenman, Justin Viezbicke, Kristin Wilkinson, Garrett Lemons, Calandra Turner-Tomaszewicz, Tomo Eguchi, Christina Fahy, Peter Dutton, and Jeffrey Seminoff: *Sea turtle strandings along the U.S. West Coast*

**Sabrina Mashburn** (SoCal Sea Turtles): *Protecting Southern California's sea turtles: harm reduction through collaboration*

**10:45 – 11:00**      **Coffee Break**

**11:00 – 12:00      Session #4 (Session Chair: Robert Gammariello)**

**Michael King** (Ocean Connectors): *From Classroom to Coastline: Inspiring future leaders in sea turtle conservation*

**Eduardo Cuevas** (Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC)): *Experiences strengthening sea turtles conservation at multiple networking scales*

**Brendan Saunders** (Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Pacific), Megan Hanna, Erica Pollard, Eileen Maher, Jeffrey Seminoff; Peter Dutton, Garrett Lemons, Cali Turner-Tomaszewicz, Andrew Maurer, Robin LeRoux, Erin LaCasella, and Jessica Curran: *Navy green sea turtle conservation and management in the Southwest Region*

**Lynn Massey** (NOAA-WCR): *Tracking turtle encounters in the Pacific coast groundfish fishery*

**12:00 – 1:30      Lunch & Video Session**

**1:30 – 3:00      Session #5 (Session Chair: Dawn Nygren-Burkert)**

**Melisa Rodriguez** (NOAA Restoration Center): *Turning the tide: uniting turtles, conservation, and community*

**Sheila Madrak** (San Diego Miramar College): *Sea turtle conservation in higher education – using sea turtles as a teaching tool in the biological sciences*

**Abigail Uribe-Martínez** (UABC), R. Aguirre-Gómez, Alberto Abreu-Grobois, Jeffrey Seminoff, Eduardo Cuevas, and Wallace J. Nichols: *Understanding how sea turtles and the ocean interact*

**Trevor Joyce** (NOAA SWFSC), Tomo Eguchi, Melissa Cook, Garrett Lemons, Jesse Pierce, Ariane Huddleston, Joseph Pfaller, and Jeffrey Seminoff: *Developing Uncrewed Aerial System (drone) survey methods to estimate green sea turtle distribution, density, and abundance in San Diego Bay and beyond*

**Cameron M. Mullaney** (Living Coast Discovery Center), Jeffrey A. Seminoff , Garrett E. Lemons , Bryant Chesney and Andrew S. Maurer: *The urban lives of green sea turtles: Insights into behavior from an animal-borne perspective*

**Jenna Contuchio** (University of California, Santa Cruz), Jeffrey Seminoff, Cali Turner Tomaszewicz, Lindsey Peavey Reeves, Shauna Fry, and Rita S. Mehta: *Southern California's final frontier: Expanding a sea turtle observer network in the Channel Islands*

**3:00 – 3:15 Coffee Break**

**3:15 – 4:15 Workshop #2: Origin Stories in Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation**

**Organizers:** Suzie Graham (Natural Intelligence Project) and Lynn Massey (NMFS WCR)

**Description:** Have you ever wondered how someone became involved in their field? What moments and experiences drove them towards a lifelong pursuit of sea turtle knowledge and understanding? Our origin story workshop will give everyone an opportunity to hear foundational stories from leaders in the field, and to share their own stories with the group.

**4:15 Closing Remarks: Aiyana Reissman** (SoCal Sea Turtles), **Jeffrey Seminoff** (NMFS SWFSC), **George Shillinger** (Upwell)

## **POSTER PRESENTATIONS (Day 2, November 6, 2024: 12 pm to 1:30 pm)**

### ***Fine-scale behaviors of green sea turtles in the San Diego Bay***

**Aniela Anuszczyk**, Cameron Mullaney, Garrett Lemons, Bryant Chesney, Tracy Tempest, Jeffrey A. Seminoff, Andrew S. Maurer

### ***Stable isotope analysis reveals life history patterns of Australian flatback turtles***

**Anna Cahill**, Cali Turner Tomaszewicz, Tony Tucker, Scott Whiting

### ***How do coastal development and tourism facilities impact sea turtles and their habitats?***

**Eduardo Calderón-Alvarado**, Abigail Uribe-Martínez, Luis Malpica-Cruz, Napoleón Elizondo-Gudiño, Eduardo Cuevas

### ***Creation of a 3D Printed Prosthetic to Ameliorate Spinal Deformity in an Atlantic Loggerhead Sea Turtle***

**Brian Davis**, Jenn Nero, Kent Osborn, Jennifer Frohlich, Jackie Illario

### ***Enhancing Data Accuracy in Community Science: A Training Framework***

**Heidi Ziegler**, Starling Walter, Dawn Nygren, Cassandra Davis

### ***Ecological traps: the hidden threat to the sea turtles***

**Tania Manarini**, Aldo Guevara-Carrizales, Ricardo Cavieses-Nuñez, Eduardo Cuevas

### ***The characterization of a socioecological system in Bahía de los Ángeles, Mexico, focused on sea turtles***

**Camila Reyes**, José Alberto Zepeda-Domínguez, Erika Santacruz-López, Eduardo Cuevas

### ***Genetic stock identification of fisheries bycatch provides insights into differences in broad-scale distribution patterns of leatherbacks in the North and Southeast Pacific***

**Suzanne E. Roden**, Erin L. LaCasella, Joanna Alfaro-Shigueto, George H. Balazs, Nelly de Paz Campos, Miguel Donoso, Amy Frey, T Todd Jones, Jeffrey C. Mangel, Summer Martin, Shawn Murakawa, Patricia Zarate, Peter H. Dutton

### ***Unraveling the migratory mysteries of North Pacific loggerheads using experimental oceanography***

LB Crowder, DK Briscoe, GH Balazs, JJ Polovina, JA Seminoff, FA Abreu-Grobois, CA Lee Hing, M Kurita, M Mori, D Parker, M Rice, T Saito, BS Santos, CN Turner Tomaszewicz, N Yamaguchi



