

Thousands of cold-stunned sea turtles being rescued in Texas

February 17 2021



Thousands of Atlantic green sea turtles and Kemp's ridley sea turtles suffering from cold stun are laid out to recover Tuesday, Feb. 16, 2021 at the South Padre Island Convention Center on South Padre Island, Texas. (Miguel Roberts/The Brownsville Herald via AP)

Residents, some of whom lack heat or [basic amenities in their own](#)

[homes](#) due to the unusually chilly weather, have been rescuing cold-stunned sea turtles and taking them to a convention center in a South Texas resort town.

"Every 15 minutes or less there's another truck or SUV that pulls up," Ed Caum, executive director of the South Padre Island Convention and Visitors Bureau, told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

He said sometimes people bring one or two sea turtles, sometimes more. "We had trailers full yesterday coming in that had 80, 100, 50," he said.

The South Padre Island Convention Center started pitching in Monday when its neighbor, Sea Turtle Inc., could no longer handle the number of sea turtles being dropped off, and their mostly outdoor operation had lost power. He said the convention center itself didn't have power or water till early Wednesday morning.

He says they've "collected" more than 3,500 sea turtles so far. He said he hesitates to use the word rescued because "we know we're going to lose some."

Caum said that [with another cold front approaching](#), they don't know when they'll be able to return the sea turtles to the water.

Temperatures in the area on Wednesday afternoon were in the 40s. He said it may be Saturday—when temperatures are expected to reach the low 60s (above 15 Celsius)—before the turtles can be released back into the Gulf.



South Padre Island's Sea Turtle, Inc. employees and volunteers move rescued Atlantic green sea turtles and Kemp's ridley sea turtles out of the back of a pickup truck Tuesday, Feb. 16, 2021, after thousands suffer from cold stun due to several days of freezing temperatures in the waters off South Padre Island, Texas. (Miguel Roberts/The Brownsville Herald via AP)



A volunteer gently transports cold stunned sea turtles Tuesday, Feb. 16, 2021

into the recovery area at the South Padre Island Convention Center on South Padre Island. (Miguel Roberts/The Brownsville Herald via AP)

He said with power returned they have been able to bring the convention center's temperature to 60 degrees.

"We're trying to do the best we can to save as many turtles as possible," he said.

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Citation: Thousands of cold-stunned sea turtles being rescued in Texas (2021, February 17) retrieved 5 June 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2021-02-thousands-cold-stunned-sea-turtles-texas.html>

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