

Protocol- reTURN the Favor

To save stranded horseshoe crabs, we ask that you follow these simple guidelines:

1. Hold crabs by their sides, not the tail – crabs are harmless!
2. Gently place crabs on their feet pointing towards the water.
3. Leave crabs where you find them – do not remove live or dead crabs from the beach.
4. If you encounter shorebirds please do not disturb them – walk well away from flocks to allow them to feed and roost undisturbed – or end your walk.
5. Do not enter a closed beach unless you are on a sanctioned reTURN the Favor walk, and only from sunset to sunrise.
6. On open beaches, plan your outing around a falling or low tide.
7. Obtain permission before entering private property.



Rescue Walk Datasheet Instructions

Date: Day, month, year the walk occurred.

in Group: List the total number of people present in your group at the start of the walk (including group leader).

Beach Name and Section: List the beach area you have been assigned to monitor and circle whether it is an “open”, “closed”, or “partially closed” beach. Closed or partially closed beaches include: Villas Beach, Sunray Beach, Norburys Landing, Rutgers Beach, Highs Beach, Pierces Point, Kimbles Beach, Cooks Beach, Reeds Beach, Thompsons Beach, Moores Beach, Raybins Beach, Fortescue Beach, Money Island. For beach section, refer to the fact sheet for your beach (available on RTF website).

Start Time/ End Time: Time you enter onto the beach to rescue crabs/ the time you walk off the beach.

Tidal Stage: Record the tidal stage occurring at the **start** of your walk. Best tides are during a falling or low tide.

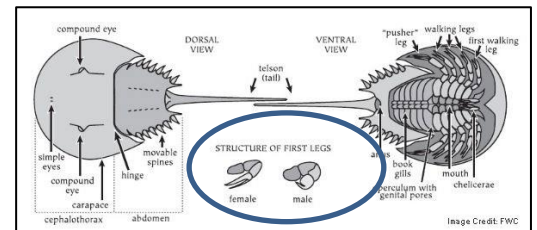
Water Conditions: Calm- glassy to ripples; Moderate- slight chop; Rough- white caps/ large waves

Wind Speed: 0-5 mph: no wind to a slight rustle; 5-10 mph: wind felt on face and tree leaves move; 10-20 mph: small trees begin to sway and dust is raised up from the ground; over 20 mph: entire trees sway/ large branches move.

Terrapin tally: Dead terrapins may be found during walks. Record the number of dead terrapins by shell size: ‘small’: straight length of shell from head to tail is ≤ 6 inches (approx. length of a pen), or ‘large’: shell longer than 6 inches. To prevent double counting, put the carcasses in the dunes if possible. Mark ‘Y’ if pictures are taken and email them to info@returnthefavornj.org, including information on date and beach.

Comments: Record additional notes such as unique weather conditions (e.g., high winds, precipitation) or incidental wildlife sightings, to explain why a walk was not completed (e.g., time limitations, shorebird presence), or other pertinent information.

Rescued Horseshoe Crabs: Use tick marks to record **live** Horseshoe Crabs rescued during the complete walk. Tally tick marks for each category to determine total for each sex. To distinguish male and female crabs, examine the front-most pair of claws. In male crabs, they are modified into “claspers” that resemble boxing gloves.



- **Overtured Crabs:** Crabs overturned on the beach, most likely due to wave action. Does not include crabs dug into sand.
- **Impinged Crabs-Type:** Please complete a new section for each impingement structure and/or type applicable for your walk. Tally the males and females rescued for each section. See the impingement definitions sheet, found on the website.
- **Location/Notes:** Include details, including GPS coordinates of formidable impingement hazards, or provide a detailed description of the hazard and location. Reference hazards listed on Fact Sheets as possible.

Tag Identification: Carefully record information on the tag found and complete tag number (usually 5 or 6 digits, record zeros) on the datasheet. Tags may be from LIVE or DEAD crabs. Tags may be removed from dead crabs, but not live crabs. All tag data reported from reTURN the Favor volunteers will be batch reported to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



If you experience any issues or notice suspicious activities, please contact a NJ Fish and Wildlife Conservation Officer: **877-WARNDEP**

Your data are important to our program! Data may be entered online at returnthefavornj.org or submitted directly to us. For more information, please email info@returnthefavornj.org.

Impingement Definitions



Manmade Impingements

- **Bin blocks:** Concrete, rectangular blocks used in building and retention structures.
- **Riprap:** A structured, stone or concrete wall running parallel to the beach (as opposed to a jetty or groin, which runs perpendicular to the shoreline).
- **Rubble:** Broken up pieces of concrete, rebar, or metal, remaining from construction projects, often found in the tideline or upper beach.
- **Outfall pipes:** a pipe running perpendicular to the tideline, used to carry wastewater or from storm drains. Includes the wooden support structures that surround the pipe.
- **Jetty/groin:** A stone or concrete structure that runs perpendicular to the tideline. This structure usually extends into the water.
- **Boat ramp:** All structures associated with an existing or out-of-use boat ramp, including support posts and pilings, the ground layer of concrete, wooden sides, etc.
- **House:** Structures associated with an intact residence, including deck pilings, stairs, seawalls and bulkheads used to stabilize the home and property.
- **Marine Debris:** Any trash, litter, or object that can catch crabs. Examples include monofilament, sandbags, tires, rope, or fencing materials.

Natural Impingements

- **Overwash:** Crabs located in sandy overwash lobes high above the tide line (right-side up or down, not entangled in vegetation), and out of reach of the next high tide. Often occurs after storms events or unusually high tides.
- **Vegetation/Peat above high tide line:** Crabs stranded in live or dead vegetation above the high tide line. Often occurs in marshes and dune grass following very high tides.
- **Vegetation/Peat below high tide line:** Live or dead vegetation found at or below the natural high tide line (in the typical spawning zone).

Other

- Anything that doesn't fall into the above definitions. Provide a description on the datasheet.



Overwash



Rubble



Outfall pipes



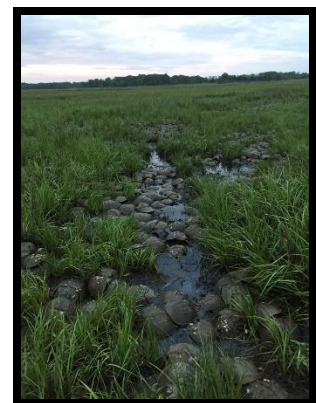
Bin blocks



Boat ramp



House



Vegetation above HT