

# SEA TURTLE

## RESCUE!

### How **warmhearted** people helped a lost and freezing loggerhead...



The struggling sea turtle can barely manage another stroke as she tries to keep warm in the cold water. Chilly autumn weather has hit **Cape Cod Bay off Massachusetts** in the USA and now this reptile is suffering from the turtle version of hypothermia – when body temperature falls below normal levels. Her strength is fading very fast.

After one final sweep of her exhausted front limbs, she goes limp. Bobbing on the surface of the water, her fate depends on the direction of the wind. If she's blown seawards, she won't survive. But luckily, the wind propels her towards land and she washes up on a beach.

Sapped of energy, the turtle lies motionless in the sand. She's still bitterly cold. If she doesn't get help soon, she won't have a chance of surviving.

#### HELP ARRIVES

Taking a morning stroll along the beach, local resident Brian Long spots what appears to be a large boulder near the water's

edge. As he gets closer he realises that the rock-like object is actually a big turtle. The sea creature is so still, Brian can't tell if she's alive. He quickly phones a conservation organisation called the **Massachusetts Audubon Society**. The call reaches its director, Bob Prescott, who rushes to the beach in his pickup truck.

Once at the scene, Bob identifies the 76-cm-long creature as a **loggerhead sea turtle**. An endangered species, these turtles spend their summers in the north and their winters in warmer southern waters. 'This loggerhead probably got lost while navigating down the coast and missed the chance to migrate before cold weather set in,' Bob says.

The animal's eyes are closed and she's not visibly breathing. To check if the

turtle is still alive, Bob gently touches her neck. Slowly the big-beaked reptile raises her head. She's hanging on but urgently needs medical attention.

The two men hoist the 70kg animal onto a cart which they pull to Bob's truck, and they place the loggerhead onto a soft pad in the back. Bob drives the turtle to the nearby **Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary**, where vets give her an initial examination.

Then a volunteer drives the loggerhead to the **New England Aquarium in Boston, Massachusetts**, where the turtle can begin her recovery...

#### TRAVELLING TURTLE

- 1 The rescued loggerhead is found on the shores of Cape Cod Bay.
- 2 She's taken to the New England Aquarium in Massachusetts for rehab.
- 3 Months later she travels by plane to the Georgia Sea Turtle Centre.
- 4 Finally she's released in the waters off Florida.



Some Pacific loggerheads migrate over 10,500km between nesting beaches.

#### DID YOU KNOW...?

A cooler loggerhead nest will produce more male hatchlings, whereas a warmer one will produce more females.

Turn over to follow this frail loggerhead's remarkable recovery...



The weak turtle arrives at the rehab centre