



# 42nd International Sea Turtle Symposium

## Workshop Proposal for ISTS42

**Title of Proposed Workshop:**

GIS Workshop

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**Names of All Organisers:**

Andrew DiMatteo, Laura Sparks, Brendan Hurley, Zachary Posnik

**Preferred Date for the Workshop:** Monday 25th March 2024

**Suggested Duration of Workshop:** Full Day (8 hours)

**Description and Justification of the Workshop:**

The GIS workshop will introduce participants to best practices in data management, visualization, and analysis. Given their long migrations, cryptic life stages, and broad global distribution, GIS is a critical tool in understanding sea turtle ecology and communicating results. Multiple data types and techniques will be covered. Examples include geostatistics, satellite telemetry movement modeling, managing and analyzing environmental data, using online mapping platforms, and using R for GIS analyses. These topics are complex disciplines meriting their own workshops (or courses), but we expect to introduce participants to common workflows and resources to build a strong foundation for future analyses.

Given next year's theme for the conference, "Inspiring the Next Generation of Sea Turtle Conservationists", this workshop provides an important venue for new researchers to learn critical technical skills to bring home to their sites and projects. As such, the workshop will be more heavily focused on capacity building for early career students and professionals – providing them guidance on getting started with their analyses, highlighting important resources, and letting users ask questions to support their work. Time will be dedicated at the end of the workshop for one-on-one time with GIS professionals where participants can ask questions specific to their projects and receive guidance from experts in the field.



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Participants do not need to be GIS 'pros' to attend, in fact we encourage newer GIS users to attend to support the theme of the conference! Experienced GIS professionals are welcome to attend to share their experiences with others, network with other professionals, and support new users. Our goal is to foster a robust GIS user base within the sea turtle community and provide a forum for learning and resource sharing.

## **Expected Outcomes of the Workshop:**

This will be the 6th time the GIS workshop has been offered at ISTS. Past workshops have been very successful at engaging attendees of varied skill levels. Newer users have been given resources to start or continue their analyses while avoiding common pitfalls through knowledge of community best practices. In many cases, attendees had data but didn't know what the next steps were. Exposure to presentations of analyses in a forum where robust discussion with multiple experts has provided an opportunity not available elsewhere at the ISTS. Experienced users have been able to lend their expertise in discussion, network with other professionals, and still obtain new information, as almost no one is an expert in all facets of GIS. One-on-one discussion time has been very popular in the past as GIS problems are often project specific. We plan to facilitate this by having multiple GIS experts with diverse GIS expertise, and experience within the sea turtle community, at the workshop. This has proven an effective model in the past based on feedback received from the previous 5 workshops. We anticipate that participants will come out with an increased understanding of best practices, new colleagues to help with analysis, and advice on their specific GIS issues. Building capacity for early career sea turtle conservationists is a primary goal for this workshop.

Prior to the symposium, a call for presentations will go out on the CTURTLE listserv. Individuals interested in presenting their work at the GIS workshop should focus on the technical GIS aspects of the project and be prepared to provide brief demos of relevant techniques/software.