

Nesting characteristics of Olive Ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) in San Juan, Batangas, Philippines

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2008-20009

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Abstract

Sea turtles are large, air-breathing reptiles that are morphologically adapted to live in the sea. These organisms play a critical role in the complex food webs and nutrient cycling in marine ecosystems. Five out of the seven existing sea turtle species in the world are found in the Philippines; all of them are at least classified as endangered species. Although the country's waters are likely to host significant populations of these species, there are limited studies that examined the local scale sea turtle nesting populations. The available literature mostly focused on green turtles in Turtle Islands, Tawi-Tawi. Nesting sites are widespread throughout the Philippines; and with the growing intrusion of human inhabitants along the coasts, it is very important to assess these nesting habitats. This study aims to evaluate the nesting characteristics of Olive Ridley turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) in San Juan, Batangas, Philippines. This area has historical evidence of sea turtle nesting. Sea turtle monitoring & nesting beach habitat surveys will be conducted to determine the nest abundance, clutch size, and hatching success of Olive Ridley. Temperature, humidity and sand quality will be measured to evaluate the influence of these environmental factors on sea turtle nesting and hatching success through data loggers and sand collection. The spatial distribution of Olive Ridley nesting will be assessed, as well. The results of this study will serve as baseline data for comprehensive sea turtle monitoring and evaluation in San Juan, Batangas, which can ultimately be used for science-based sea turtle management and conservation.