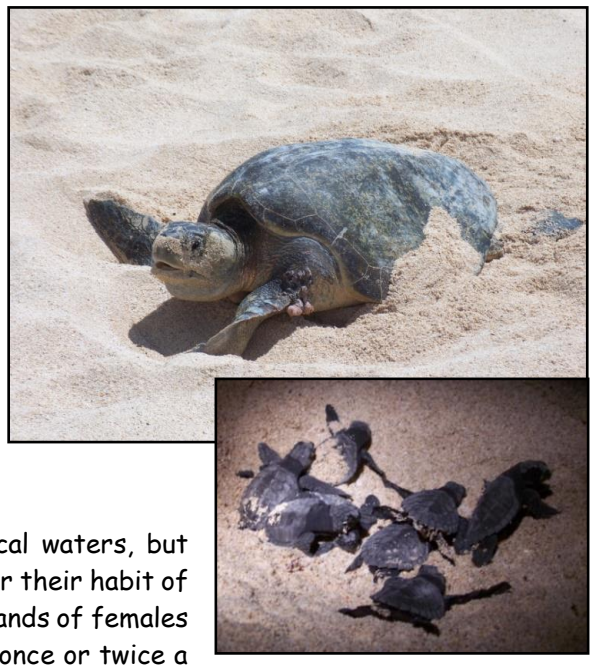
COMMON NAME: Olive Ridley Sea Turtle
SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Lepidochelys olivacea*
LEGAL STATUS: Threatened (Federal/State). Protected under CITES.



APPEARANCE: Adult olive ridley sea turtles average 100 pounds, are olive/ grayish green in color and have a heart shaped top shell with 5 to 9 pairs of thorny scales or plates.

HABITAT: Olive ridley sea turtles primarily spend time in the open ocean but have been known to inhabit coastal areas. They migrate from pelagic foraging to coastal breeding and nesting grounds, back to pelagic foraging. They are globally distributed in the tropical regions of the world.

DIET: Adult olive ridley sea turtles are carnivorous and feed on a wide variety of organisms including fish and mollusks.

REPRODUCTION: Nesting occurs throughout tropical waters, but rarely in Hawai'i. Olive ridley sea turtles are known for their habit of mass synchronized nestings where hundreds to thousands of females come ashore at once to lay their eggs. Females nest once or twice a season every year after about 15 years of age. They produce a clutch of approximately 100 eggs and incubation takes 50 to 60 days.

MCBH OCCURENCE: Although olive ridley sea turtles are rarely seen in Hawai'i, on July 16, 2009 one nested on MCBH's Pyramid Rock Beach; the first documented nesting on O'ahu. Although other known nestings occurred in on Maui (1985) and Hilo, Hawai'i (2002), the MCBH nesting was the most successful of all events, with over 50% of the eggs laid hatching in September 2009. Natural Resources staff collaborated with NOAA Fisheries and USFWS biologists to monitor the nest and relocate, protect, and conduct a public releasing of the hatchlings.

THREATS: Threats to all of Hawai'i's sea turtles include: loss of foraging and nesting habitat due to climate change, development, and pollution; recreational beach use (including nest damage by recreational vehicles); predation of eggs; coastal development; beach erosion; artificial lighting; boat collisions; entanglement in fishing gear and marine debris; incidental take in sport and commercial fisheries; poaching; military testing and training activities on beaches; and the fibropapilloma virus.

MCBH CONSERVATION MEASURES

MCBH engages in a variety of conservation measures to support the continued health and viability of green sea turtles. Specific management actions detailed in the MCBH INRMP are assessed annually as part of the INRMP performance evaluation in cooperation with USFWS, NOAA Fisheries, and Hawai'i DLNR, and revised if necessary due to new information. The following management activities have been implemented and procedures established to protect green sea turtles to the greatest extent possible. Management activities aimed at maintaining ecosystem health benefits these species

indirectly, such as implementing measures to minimize erosion and polluted run-off and invasive species removal.

Predator Control.

Sea Turtle Monitoring.

Wildlife Friendly Lighting.

Beach Management/Shoreline Protection.

Sea Turtle Protection Zones. Any incidences of basking or nesting sea turtles should be reported to the military police at (808) 257-2123.

Marine Debris Removal.

Access Restrictions.

Protocols for Military Maneuvers and Large-scale Recreational Events.

Injured/Dead Response.

Educational Outreach.

For more information: MCBH Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan. 2016. Sections 4, 6, 7.4, 7.6, 7.7, 8, Appendix C & D.

PHOTOS

1. Photographer unknown, Nesting Olive Ridley at Pyramid Rock Beach, MCBH.
2. Lance Bookless, MCBH, Olive Ridley Hatchlings at Pyramid Rock Beach, MCBH.