

Source: E.K. Nareshwar  
Helpin' Herps  
B-201, Alaukik Apts, Bodakdev, Satellite,  
Ahmedabad 380015. India.

### Tamil Nadu

The Students' Sea Turtle Conservation Network (SSTCN) monitored 7 km of coast in Chennai in 1998 – 99. 25 dead turtles were enumerated. 69 nests were translocated to the hatchery at Nilankarai, Chennai and

approximately 6000 hatchlings were released. 15 wild nests were also monitored. Education and awareness programmes were conducted for city schools and colleges. In 1999/ 2000, 4 dead turtles have already been counted till Jan 1, 2000.

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## Research News

- Bivash Pandav, who has been working on Olive Ridelys in Orissa for the past five years, has been appointed as Scientist 'SC' at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun. The WII's research team, led by Pandav and BC Choudhury, have tagged 3000 mating pairs and 5000 nesting females on the Orissa coast over the past three years. They have been estimating nesting and mortality along the coast. Bivash Pandav will continue his tagging studies and the monitoring of nesting and mortality. He will also be initiating a study on the quantitative analysis of incidental sea turtle captures and mortalities during commercial shrimp trawling in the coastal waters off Orissa.
- Karthik Ram, a student of Pondicherry University, will be working with Operation Kachappa as a researcher. He will study the mating behaviour and movement patterns of Olive Ridelys off the Orissa coast. The densities, movement patterns and distribution will be determined, enabling enforcement agencies to monitor and protect the turtles.
- Dr. M. Rajagopalan, along with P. Kannan and S. Venkatesan of Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) are initiating a study of Green turtles and Olive Ridelys on the Gujarat coast. The study will begin with a survey off the coast during the early part of 2000.
- A population genetics study was carried out by Dr. Kartik Shanker and B.C. Choudhury (Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun) in collaboration with Dr. Ramesh Aggarwal and Dr. Lalji Singh of the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad. 38 samples from principal sites at Orissa and Chennai were analysed using Multilocus DNA fingerprinting, mitochondrial DNA sequencing, RAPD analysis and microsatellite analysis. Preliminary results suggest that population structure along the coast is weak.