

## Accidental Catch of Green Turtle *Chelonia mydas* in Shore-Seine at Kovalam Near Vizhinjam, South Kerala

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The nesting and hatching of the eggs of the common sea turtle Olive ridley, *Lepidochelys olivacea*, was reported at Mulloor near Vizhinjam (Krishnapillai, 1997). Accidental catch of leatherback turtle *Dermochelys coriacea* on 04 Aug 1998 was recorded from Vizhinjam (Krishnapillai and Thiaagarajan, 2000). Releasing of leatherback turtles back into the sea at Kovalam near Vizhinjam (Krishnapillai et al., 2001) and another one at Pallithurai on 14 Dec 2002 was reported (in press). The present note is about the capture of a green turtle *Chelonia mydas* in the shore-seine at Kovalam, one of the tourist centres near Vizhinjam.

The turtle was caught in a shore seine operated at Kovalam on 09 March 2000. On intimation to CMFRI, the author made an immediate visit to the spot. The animal was different in colour and size from the common

and abundant sea turtle olive ridley. It was identified as a female *Chelonia mydas* based on the key (Silas et al., 1983). It weighed 13 kg It was alive and healthy even though it was dragged to the shore and from there brought to the marine aquarium of Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute at Vizhinjam and left in the turtle tank on the same day, where five numbers of Hawksbill turtles were also kept.

The floor and sides of the turtle tank (size 280 x 185 x 87 cm), were fixed with white tiles of size 6 x 6 inches. An outlet was provided for the tank. It was filled with sea water and the water level was maintained at a depth of about 40 to 50 cm. Sea water was changed every day in the morning.

The Hawksbill turtles, disturbed by the introduction of green turtle, chased it and damaged the post central scutes and part of the tail. Hence the green turtle was shifted to

Vizhinjam for growth studies which will be dealt with separately.

### References

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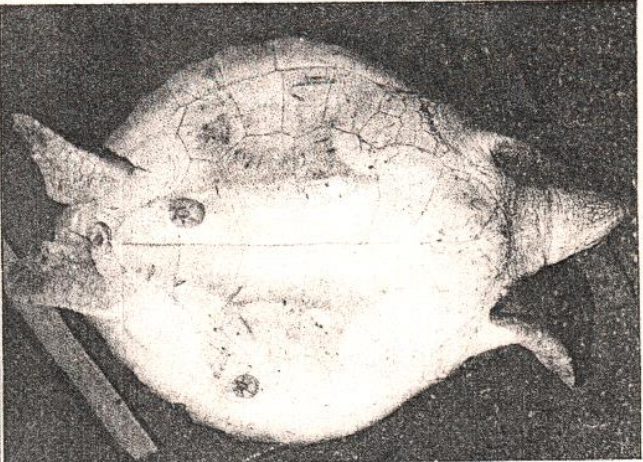
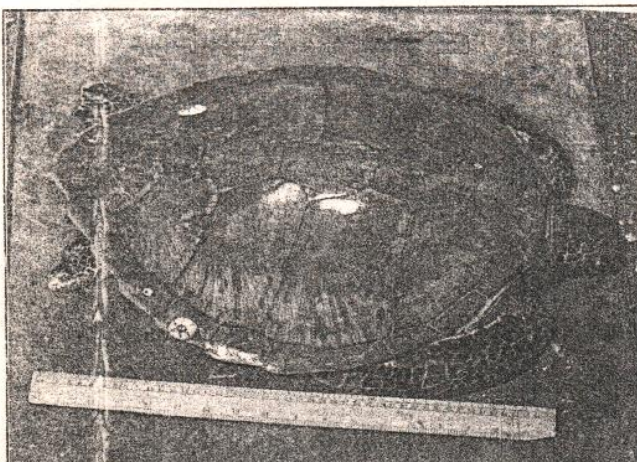


Fig.1. Dorsal view of green turtle showing the attachment of barnacles on marginal and lateral scutes of the carapace.

Fig. 2. Ventral view of green turtle showing the attachment of barnacles on the plastron.

Table 1. Morphometric measurements of Green turtle, *Chelonia mydas*

Parameters	Length (cm)	Width (cm)
Carapace	44	41
Plastron	37	33
Head	11	09
Anterior flipper	28	08
Posterior flipper	14	10
Total length	55	-

a cement tank of 200 x 100 x 50 cm size on the next day. Tinaderm ointment was applied on the injured parts for more than ten days which was found fairly effective in curing the physical injuries.

It was interesting to note that some barnacles were attached on the marginal and lateral scutes of the carapace and plastron of the green turtle (Figs. 1 and 2). The morphometric measurements of the specimen are given in Table 1. The turtle is at present kept in the aquarium of VRC of CMFRI,

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