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## **Nesting of a Small Hawksbill Turtle at Indira Point, Great Nicobar Island**

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Indira Point on Great Nicobar Island is the southernmost point of India (6°45'38"N, 93°48'85"E) and is only about 150 km from Sumatra, Indonesia. Great Nicobar Island is a part of the Andaman & Nicobar group of islands, which have important nesting and feeding populations of leatherbacks, green turtles and hawksbills (Bhaskar, 1993; Andrews, 2000). Great Nicobar Island also has a significant nesting population of leatherback turtles (Andrews & Shanker, 2002). Hawksbill turtles have been reported to nest at a few beaches on this island. Bhaskar (1979) reported nesting of hawksbills at Indira point (or Pygmalion point as it was then known). The beach at Indira point is less than half a kilometer in length and the offshore approach is very rocky.

During monitoring of leatherback turtles at Galathea during 2001-02, we visited the beach on a single night. On January 23, 2002, a hawksbill was observed nesting at Indira point. The turtle was extremely small for a nesting hawksbill (CCL – 63 cm; CCW – 52 cm). She laid 46 eggs. Following this, the beach was monitored for one week, during which period a single hawksbill (CCL – 83 cm, CCW – 73 cm) nest was recorded.

While winter may not be the peak nesting season for hawksbills, interviews with the locals suggest that intensity of green turtle and hawksbill nesting at Indira point is low. There is a lighthouse at Indira Point, and perhaps one or two of the workers can be trained and remunerated for monitoring this beach.

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