


TURTLE TRACKS



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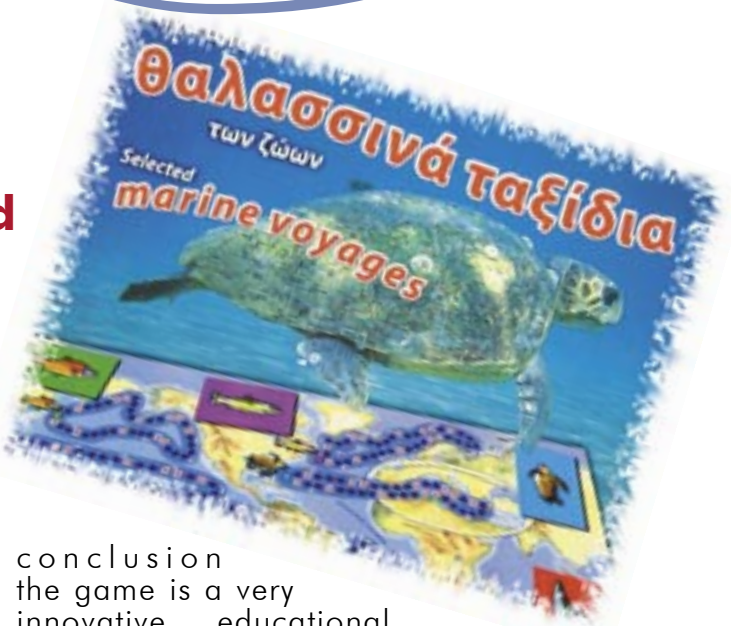
Our Monitoring Project in Zakynthos, the oldest in the Mediterranean

Sea turtles are long-lived animals with a long maturation period and exhibit "peculiar" reproductive characteristics. For instance, they do not nest every year showing irregular nesting patterns, i.e. they nest every two, three or possibly more years. Therefore, the nests that we count on beaches over a nesting season represent only the part of the female turtles that are reproductively active in the particular season. Further, the annual number of nests usually shows great fluctuations from year to year. This is understandable since different segments of the reproductive population nest every season. Strong annual fluctuations usually hide the underlying population trend (if any). Under these circumstances, it is impossible to detect a reliable trend before passing 25-30 years of intense beach monitoring. ARCHELON conducts a standardized monitoring project on the Island of Zakynthos since 1984. From that time, all nesting beaches in Laganas Bay are monitored in the

same way and the annual number of nests is confirmed under the same methodology. ARCHELON's monitoring project on Zakynthos is the oldest in the Mediterranean Sea and one of the oldest in the world. Its great value is contained in its longevity. It is expected that in a couple of years when 25 seasons of unfailing monitoring effort are completed, we will be able to detect a possible trend in the population of nesting females which use Laganas Bay as a nesting habitat. This is why Laganas Bay has been designated an "index" nesting area by the IUCN's Marine Turtle Specialist Group. Long-term data from "index" areas are used for the classification of threatened species in the Red Lists of IUCN. With these thoughts we would like to thank again the many hundreds of field assistants and volunteers who have worked in this long-term project, and without whom it would be quite impossible to obtain such reliable results.

Selected Marine Voyages in a game world

ARCHELON launched its new bilingual table game "Selected Marine Voyages" at the National Book Centre in Athens, on 25 October 2006. The table game, designed by ARCHELON's Board member Anna Kremezi-Margaritouli, is about the migration of marine animals, highlighting three characteristic cases: salmon (fish), sea turtle (reptile), whale (mammal). Marine animals migrate great distances in order to feed, to mate and produce offspring. Each player takes the role of an animal and follows its voyage on an annual cycle, engaging in pleasant and unpleasant experiences and consequently learning the marvels of life. In



conclusion the game is a very innovative educational tool and gift. More information in our website www.archelon.gr.

Celebrating the World Animals Day

On the occasion of the celebration of the World Animals Day, ARCHELON organized two sea turtle releases and a tree-planting activity at the Sea Turtle Rescue Centre in Glyfada. In particular, "Odyssey" who had remained in the Rescue



Centre for one and a half years and "Midia" for four months were successfully released. 'Odyssey' was also fitted with a satellite transmitter to follow its movements. The transmitter was donated by the students that took part in a student exchange international programme "People-to-People" last summer. "Odyssey's" movements can be followed on-line by visiting www.seaturtle.org. Furthermore, in order to improve the surroundings of the Rescue Centre, a tree-planting action was organized. Many volunteers, mostly from Geitonas School, planted about 40 tamarisk trees which will improve the aesthetic appearance of the wider area.

ARCHELON participates in Expert Meeting on the Mediterranean Action Plan



The Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (UNEP/MAP's RAC/SPA) organized an expert meeting in Libya on 15 - 16 November 2006 aiming to revise the existing Action Plan for the Conservation of Sea Turtles in the Mediterranean, which is adopted by the Barcelona Convention, which encompasses almost all Mediterranean countries. ARCHELON was invited to the meeting and was represented by Aliko Panagopoulou. The revision work, done by ten experts from Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Libya, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey, was based on the latest scientific and conservation developments in the region. The revised Action Plan will be submitted to the contracting parties of the Barcelona Convention next June, aiming to be adopted by the end of 2007. The meeting was hosted by the Environment Authority of Libya and held in Misratah, a town 200 km east of Tripoli.



Awareness programme in Kyllini with TUI's support

The largest tour operator in the world, TUI, has shown since several years ago a particular interest in sea turtle conservation. In Greece, TUI supported once again ARCHELON's public awareness programme. Thanks to this support ARCHELON was able to organize public awareness activities at the Grecotel's hotel Olympia Riviera Resort in Kyllini, on the western Peloponnesus coast, across Zakynthos Island. In vintage areas of the hotel three exhibition panels were installed, featuring sea turtles and especially constructed for this occasion, and nine live presentations were made to hotel guests. A group of volunteers from the nearby ARCHELON's project in Kyparissia Bay visited the hotel every 15 days and conducted the presentations distributing at the same time information material, especially designed for the occasion. The support of TUI for this project is very important and is planned to continue next year.

CELEBRATION ON THE OCCASION OF ARCHELON'S

17 YEARS ON CRETE



For the completion of 17 years operation on the island of Crete, ARCHELON organized a presentation on 14 September 2006 at the CRETA STAR Hotel in Rethymno. Thanos Belalidis, the former ARCHELON project leader on Crete, presented the progress of the Society from the start at 1989 up to now. As it is well known the project has been expanded to three important nesting areas of the loggerhead turtle on Crete, namely Rethymno, Chania and Messara. The event happened with the kind support of Johnson Diversey and Aegean Star Hotels. In the context of the whole celebration, a green sea turtle, named "Theodora", was released after its rehabilitation at the Sea Turtle Rescue Center in Glyfada.

ZAKYNTHOS NEWS

During the 2006 nesting season, 120 volunteers contributed to the monitoring and public awareness tasks, by recording and protecting some 957 nests and informing more than 60,000 visitors about the significance of conserving the most important nesting site of the loggerhead turtle in the Mediterranean. In 2006, the Management Agency of the National Marine Park of Zakynthos introduced some new plans in order to improve the protection of the beaches. Wardens were guarding the beaches and informed tourists; road barriers kept vehicles away from the beaches; an Information Center was operated; improvements at the nesting beach of Daphni (such as removing walls and rocks from the beach) were made. Nevertheless, the Management Agency's approach to keep the illegal buildings at Daphni, by incorporating some of them in the Park's activities, increase worries on the long-term sustainability of the area as a highly critical sea turtle nesting area. ARCHELON is cooperating with NGOs and the Park towards a sustainable development of the island that will ensure the existence of the turtles in the long term.

PELOPONNESE NEWS

Once more this year Koroni beach, in southern Peloponnesus, hosted ARCHELON's monitoring and public awareness programme. The local community welcomed the small but stable number of volunteers, and their devotion and enthusiasm turned out to be very helpful. Morning beach patrols often ended up in boating with local fishermen, in fishing lessons and sometimes in the discovery of nests at remote beaches. In total, 41 nests were protected. Furthermore, we had the chance to swim with a mother *Caretta caretta* which did not seem at all disturbed by our presence and to save an injured male entangled in a trawl net.

In another area of Peloponnesus, Gytheio, they were recorded and protected more than twice as many nests as in 2005. A highlighted note was the release of Aphrodite II, one of the turtles that were found stranded near Gytheio in 2005 with serious flipper and head injuries, and were successfully rehabilitated at the Sea Turtle Rescue Centre in Glyfada.

CRETE NEWS

This year, as every year since 1990, ARCHELON's summer project on Crete was successfully completed. At the three monitored areas of Crete the following nests were recorded and protected: in Rethymno 209, in Chania 44 and in Messaras Bay 44.

It should be noted that the number of nests is

decreasing almost steadily in the last few years and this gives an alarming signal for the survival of these three nesting aggregations on the island of Crete. Despite the fact that there are more nests in other parts of Crete (e.g. Pantanassa, Fodele, Anisaras, Kali Limenes), these three areas are considered to be the most densely nested sites.

FUNDERS - THANKS



For sponsoring a turtle transmitter



For offering pharmaceutical products for turtles at the Rescue Centre



For hosting event in Crete



For support



For sponsoring event and the Greek Newsletter, Issue 68



Supporting sea turtles' rehabilitation at the Rescue Centre



For support

Want to become a volunteer?

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<http://www.archelon.gr>

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