



# V. S. P. C. A.

## VISAKHA SOCIETY FOR PROTECTION AND CARE OF ANIMALS

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### SEA TURTLE REPORT FOR 2009-10

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#### **BACKGROUND:**

The Olive Ridley and other sea turtles program which we have carried out since 1996-97 continues to move strongly despite the many serious, permanent disturbances to the urban based places. The Olive Ridelys continue to flood in during the months of February and March mostly. However, the increasingly crowded urban beaches are not safe for the nests left on their own so we have to keep monitoring them. Then the eggs can hatch and the hatchlings can move safely into the ocean. With all our experience and expertise over the past 15 years we have made the sea turtle a household name in this region. Today it is a question that renders deep into our mind and heart that the beaches are shrinking with every passing season. This is because of the increase in the human population and the consequent related developments in the form of entertainment, industrial explorations and commercial activities.

Therefore, this is our urgent appeal to the Government and Forest Departments that while all checks are made during the seasons there is a desperate to help the sea turtle in protection and conservation by setting up suitable, selective hatcheries will protect and conserve the Olive Ridley of this region.

It is important to note that significant nesting grounds to the North of our state of Andhra Pradesh (A.P) are a crucial factor as located adjacent to the State of Orissa. The Orissa beaches attracts mass nesting and is the largest rookery for Olive Ridleys in the world. Thus, the beaches of North A.P. gains significance by adding its large beaches nearby for more successful hatchings. Away from the city, the season 2009-10 has seen a steady increase in the nestings . With lesser incidences in the disturbed urban areas the sea turtles are being pulled further north into remote areas.



**Photo of Olive Ridley nesting at night: copyright VSPCA**

**STATISTICAL NESTING DATA from local beach areas:**

Month	Area		Total Nests
	Costal Battery To Vuda Park	Vuda Park to Endada	
JAN'10	5	25	30
Feb'10	45	119	164
MAR'10	15	86	101
APR'10	8	12	20
TOTAL	73	242	315

Our sea turtle program continues to gain momentum with your support and we hope to be able to move further North AP when these significant nesting continuously happen. We particularly wish to take up the awareness education program in these more remote villages. That has been VSPCA's greatest success – education which leads to awareness and protection.

**TURTLE ACTION GROUP: (TAG)**

The second annual meeting of the turtle action group TAG was held at Bhubaneswar, Orissa during the month of January 2010 with participation from all organizations working to help the protection of sea turtles all along the coast of East and West India. VSPCA has a major role to play in this important group. This action group for the sea turtles aims at a united level to fight for the cause of sea turtles.



### **HINDRANCES:**

Despite our best dedication the problems that face the sea turtles of this urban coast is quite critical mostly due to these relevant factors:

#### **1. Industrial Pollution**

A number of industries are coming up at the costal areas. There is little to no environmental standards of their pollution levels.

#### **2. Tourism Development Programs – more activity on the beach**

#### **3. The most critical factor – the Human Population Explosion**

The ultimate solution to permanent protection of the sea turtle requires a complete understanding of the entire ecosystem and exclusive designated areas of protection. A comprehensive plan needs to be executed, implemented and evaluated by all concerned parties. We look towards development and search of all improvements of the methods to protect the sea turtles. Nature, however, has to respected and maintained on her own terms. It is our requirement to help these species which will in turn maintain and protect our environment and add to our quality of life on this planet.