

From: Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation <CTURTLE@LISTS.UFL.EDU> on behalf of Kartik Shanker <kshanker@GMAIL.COM>

Sent: Wednesday, January 3, 2018 3:49 AM

To: CTURTLE@LISTS.UFL.EDU

Subject: Re: [CTURTLE] First description that marine turtles nest several times during the nesting season?

Hi folks,

Here is an extract from my book 'From Soup to Superstar':

"Several accounts from the nineteenth century deal with sea turtles in Sri Lanka. For example, there is a remarkable description of how the animals were tagged with brass rings during the Dutch occupation in the late eighteenth century by a district officer to check if descaled hawksbill sea turtles visited the same cove for nesting again. A hawksbill turtle tagged in 1794 was recaptured in 1826 and brought to J.W. Bennett, a member of the Ceylon administration, also known for his book on and illustrations of the fishes of Ceylon(1). The '400 pound' turtle had apparently revisited the same cove to nest for thirty-two years. This may have been the first ever tagging programme in the world. Ideas about site fidelity in sea turtles existed even at that time.

James Emerson Tennant, who was an Irish politician and spent some years as the colonial secretary of Ceylon, said(2):

'In illustration of the resistless influence of instinct at the period of breeding, it may be mentioned that the same tortoise is believed to return again and again to the same spot notwithstanding that at each visit she had to undergo a repetition of this torture.'

(1) Bennett, JW (1843) Ceylon and its Capabilities. Trumpet Publishers, Rajagriya, Sri Lanka.

(2) Tennent, JE (1861) Sketches of the Natural History of Ceylon with Narratives and Anecdotes. Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, London UK.

The context of the quotes is in this paragraph from De Silva (2006), which contains a fund of fascinating information:

Bennett (1843) describes the dealings of a 'fish renter' (a businessperson who controlled the fishing activity in an area, by buying from the fisher folk and selling to the market) at Amaduwa (known as Turtle Cove in Bennett's time). The fish renter assembled his people, constructed some huts and stayed at Amudawa throughout the turtle season (April–May). At night, the renter's people scouted the beach for hawksbill turtles; immediately after egg-laying, the turtles were captured, turned on their backs and their limbs tied across the plastron. After catching several turtles, a large fire was lit and the live turtles were held over the fire on a bamboo pole passed between the tied limbs and the plastron. After the scales were well-heated and softened, the men quickly removed the vertebrals and costal scutes. The marginals were seldom taken and the reptiles were released into the sea on the assumption that the scales would regenerate and that they would return to the same cove during the next season.

De Silva, A. (2006) Marine turtles of Sri Lanka: a historical account. In: Marine turtles of the Indian subcontinent (eds. K. Shanker and B.C. Choudhury), pp 188-199. Universities Press, India.

Btw, I think numerous accounts from the 1800s and 1900s are surprisingly knowledgeable about turtle life histories. Blyth, in his appendix to Mouat's book, talks about the large migrations of leatherback turtles.

Mouat, FJ (1863) Adventures and researches among the Andaman Islanders. Hurst and Blackett, London, UK.

And I am pretty sure that Deraniyagala mentions both re-nesting by sea turtles and transoceanic migrations of leatherback turtles.

Best
Kartik

On Wed, Jan 3, 2018 at 2:34 AM, Richard Herren <rick@conserveturtles.org> wrote:
Thanks Sally. Great information and a perfect opportunity to plug the Southeast Regional Sea Turtle Meeting in Myrtle Beach, SC February 12th - 16th (https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.serstm.org_&d=DwlGaQ&c=pZJPUDQ3SB9JplYbifm4nt2IEVG5pWx2KikqInpWIZM&r=o_ljaKw1739Y26K5g-P-PsM6ZWbombkoeLylqcUefCo&m=LjrOsp2IHfY2rJX6MA_ab_Rp6oLnPsk7Ry3BONH2wR8&s=n8MTgti4G1IRLyv-ffl1o-7L7onCGNvehSletTL0IXw&e=). Those of you driving to the meeting from the south can swing by McClellanville, which is about an hour and 20 minutes south of Myrtle Beach, and pick up a copy in person :)
Rick

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-----Original Message-----

From: Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation [mailto:CTURTLE@LISTS.UFL.EDU] On Behalf Of Sally Murphy
Sent: Tuesday, January 02, 2018 12:00 PM
To: CTURTLE@LISTS.UFL.EDU
Subject: Re: [CTURTLE] First description that marine turtles nest several times during the nesting season?

Marc:

A report by US Fish & Wildlife Service on Cape Romain in 1939 documents re-nesting in Loggerheads on tagged turtles. Contained within this report, in the section on "Re-Nesting," were the following accounts:

Additional information was supplied by E.B. Chamberlain of the Charleston Museum who opened a 53-inch loggerhead (in June of 1912) and found it contained 163 eggs of all sizes, ranging from those ready for laying down to very small undeveloped ones.

In further substantiation is the following item originally printed in "The State" (Columbia, SC) and reprinted in the June 6, 1929, issue of the "News and Courier" (Charleston, SC). A local loggerhead, with a carapace three feet long and two and one-half feet wide contained, when killed and opened, "119 mature eggs, and also over 700 eggs in various states of growth, ranging in size form a grape to full size, but without the shell developed."

The title of this report is: "The Loggerheads of Cape Romain" by William P. Baldwin Jr. and John M. Lofton, Jr. It was found in the basement of the US Fish & Wildlife Service in Atlanta by Nora Murdock and republished by Bill Baldwin's son, William P. Baldwin III. Col Limpus told me it was the first sea turtle research in North America and is a treasure trove of information that has been shown to be valid over the test of time.

The main sections of the report are: Introduction, Adult turtles and mating, The nesting, The nest, Incubation, The young, Entrance into the ocean, Enemies and mortality, and Economic relationships .

Copies may be bought from The Village Museum, PO Box 595, 401 Pinckney Street, McClellanville, SC 29458.

The price on mine is \$11.95. I don't know what the shipping would entail.

If you would like to acquire a copy, contact me off line and I will give you Bill Baldwin III email address so that you can figure out how to get a copy.

Best and Happy New Year,

Sally

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-----Original Message-----

