

Sea Turtle Survey—CAST IX

The objective of the Sea Turtle Survey on Johnston Island is to obtain an estimate of the number of turtles in the area and to detect any changes in turtle activity over time. Surveys were conducted from the east (hide hole) and west sides of the JCAD peninsula for one hour every other week. Two people at each location counted the number of turtles seen surfacing. These surveys are somewhat subjective from observer to observer as turtles often surface multiple times and estimates are made to avoid double counting.

A total of thirteen surveys were completed by CAST IX with an estimate of 182 turtles seen between both locations. An average of 14.0 turtles were seen each survey; this compares with a mean of 10.78 ± 4.70 SD turtles per observation period ($n=85$) since January 2012.

Turtles were observed mating on March 21 and during the March 30 survey. Turtle tracks on South Beach were seen on several occasions with one sea turtle sighting in early April.

There appear to be no obvious trends in sea turtle presence around Johnston Island (Figure 29). Observations show some variation in sea turtle presence, ranging from six to eighteen total turtles with only one day resulting in fewer than ten turtles. Surveys during CAST IX's term were conducted on a fairly even mix of sunny and cloudy days, varying ocean conditions, and always incoming tide.

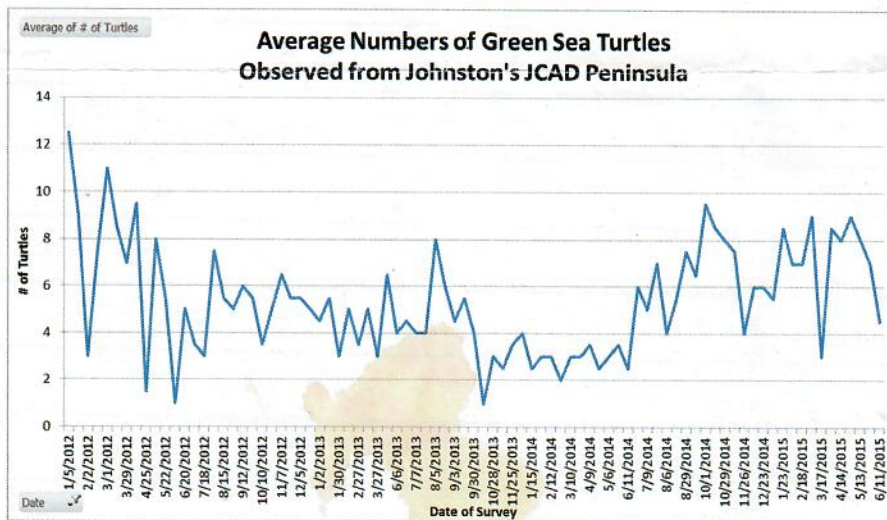
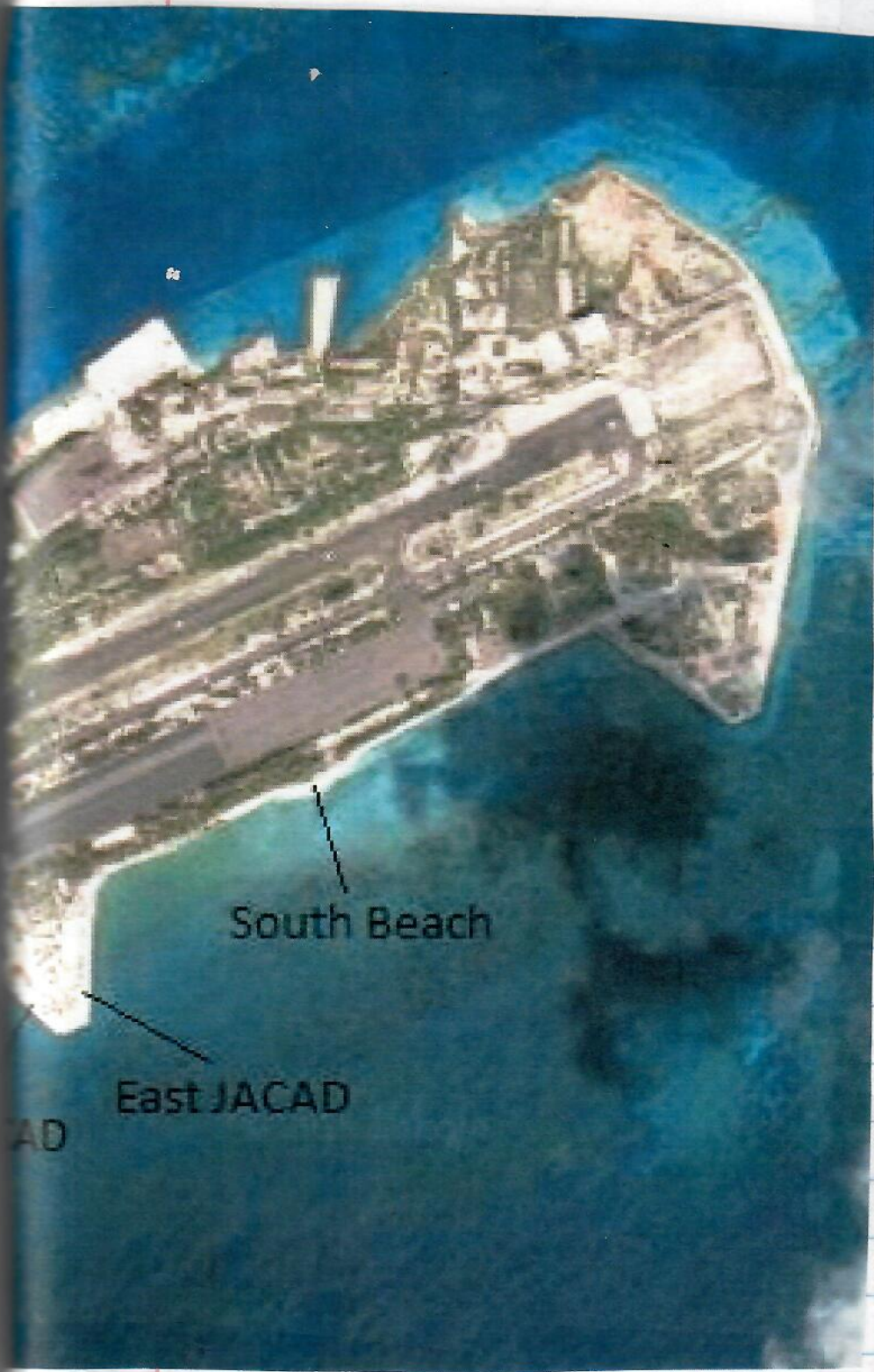


Figure 1: A summary of average estimated Green Sea Turtles counts for Sea Turtle Surveys during CAST expeditions, 2012 – 2015.

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West JA



South Beach

East JACAD

JACAD