

Ross

ADDITIONAL RECORDS OF THE PACIFIC LOGGERHEAD TURTLE, *CARETTA CARETTA GIGAS*, FROM THE NORTH MEXICAN PACIFIC COAST.

Caldwell (1962, 1963a) discussed the sea turtles in Baja Californian waters, noting the occurrence of all species of sea turtles, and the most common species to be the green turtle, *Chelonia mydas carrinegra*. There were few records of the loggerhead turtle, *Caretta caretta gigas*. The purpose of this paper is to report the occurrence of additional specimens of the loggerhead in the Gulf of California, and also in the waters off California and western Baja California.

There seem to be only two previous records of the loggerhead in the Gulf of California (Shaw 1947, Caldwell 1963b). In the course of field work in 1966, two additional specimens of the Pacific loggerhead turtle were obtained. A mature female was taken by net south of Punta San Carlos, Baja California Norte. The other turtle, a young female close to sexual maturity, was netted near San Francisquito Point, Baja California Norte (South of Bahía de Los Angeles). Data and measurements for these turtles are given in Table 1 (numbers 1 and 2 respectively).

Loggerheads have most frequently been obtained on the western side of Baja California and along the coast of Southern California. Shaw (1946) noted previous reports for the southern part of the peninsula that could refer to either *Caretta* or *Lepidochelys*, and he also reported the first record of the loggerhead from northern Baja California (referred to as an aberrant *Lepidochelys* that shared characteristics of *Caretta* and *Lepidochelys*; specimen subsequently referred to *Caretta* by Caldwell, 1962). The northernmost records of occurrence for the loggerhead on the Pacific coast are in southern Californian waters near Los Angeles (Shaw, 1947). Additional unpublished records have come to my attention; data and measurements for these five loggerheads are given in Table 1.

Of two specimens of the Pacific loggerhead living in aquaria at the Scripps Institute of Oceanography, one (Table 1, No. 3) was caught 45 miles south of Point Loma, San Diego, California (measurements taken 30 September 1965), and the other, a juvenile (Table 1, No. 6), was caught by a sport fishing boat near Coronado Island, Baja California Norte (measured on same date as above). I am indebted to Dr. Carl L. Hubbs for allowing me access to these specimens.

Three other loggerheads have been recorded from the Cape region of the peninsula. Two were caught in a scoop net by the research vessel C. H. Gilbert north of Todos Santos, Baja California Sur (23° 28' N, 110° 20' W). Both were mature males (Table 1, Nos. 4 and 5). I am grateful to Oceanographer José L. Granados G. for these records. The third turtle, a mature female, was caught in front of San José del Cabo, Baja California Sur (Table 1, No. 7). I am grateful to Oceanographer José L. Granados G. and to Fisheries Technician Manuel de la Rosa for this record.

REMARKS.—In Baja California waters loggerheads exhibit no marked seasonality (extremes in dates of capture, 4 February [Caldwell 1963b] and 16 September [Table 1] and presumably are very sparse and vagrant. The number of turtles captured yearly is perhaps a dozen with a total weight of about one ton.

However loggerheads are netted commercially on both coasts of Baja California. The entangling net, constructed of cotton or nylon line, with a mesh of about 90 cm (measured from knot to knot), is between 100 and 200 m in length and 4 to 6 m deep. The upper edge of the net is attached to plastic floats while the heavy bottom line sinks. Turtles are also captured by using a harpoon, which was described in detail by Caldwell (1963a).

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TABLE 1. Relationship between carapace length, carapace width, total weight and scale counts for seven *Caretta caretta* gigas from the Gulf of California, the southern coast of California and the West Coast of Baja California

Locality of capture	Capture date	Carapace length (mm)	Carapace width (mm)	Total weight (kg)	Verte-brals	Costals	Marginals	Infra-marginals
1. Punta San Carlos, B. C.	10 May 1966	920	750	101.5	5	5-5	12-12	3-3
2. Punta San Francisquito, B. C.	7 May 1966	660	570	32.8	5	5-5	12-12	3-3
3. Punta Loma, California	20 July 1963	465	415	8.0	5	5-5	12-12	3-3
4. W, Cabo San Lucas, B. C.	14 August 1965	630	-	-	6	7-7	12-12	3-3
5. W, Cabo San Lucas, B. C.	14 August 1965	840	-	-	5	6-7	12-12	3-3
6. Is. Coronados, B. C.	16 September 1965	256	250	2.9	5	5-5	12-12	3-3
7. San José del Cabo, B. C.	1 June 1966	710	610	-	6	6-6	12-13	3-3

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