

ONE DAY WORKSHOP ON EFFICIENT HATCHERY MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM AT MANGROL, GUJARAT, INDIA

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A one-day workshop on efficient hatchery management was held at Mangrol, Gujarat on 8th January 2014, organised by the Gujarat Forest Department, Junagadh Division, in collaboration with the local Turtle Action Group (TAG) member, Prakruti Nature Club (PNC). The workshop primarily focused on training forest staff in efficient turtle hatchery management practices. Dinesh Goswami and Jignesh Gohil from PNC were the key resource persons for this training program (Figure 1). There were nearly 65 participants, mostly forest department officials from Mangrol, Kutiyana and Veraval regions (Figure 2). In addition to Aradhana Sahu, the Deputy Conservator of Forests and Wildlife of Junagadh, there were Range Forest Officers from nearby regions,

forest guards, personnel from Marine National Parks, Jamnagar and Madhupur hatchery centres, and volunteers from PNC and Van Mitra. The workshop included general talks and oral presentations with slide shows and video clips, along with a field visit to the nearby beach.

During the inaugural session, Dinesh Goswami spoke about the importance and conservation of sea turtles, and about TAG and its role in bringing together NGOs working towards turtle conservation across different Indian states. Vijay V. Sholanki spoke about the Madhupur hatchery where he works at, and Aradhana Sahu spoke about role of the forest department and local people in conservation. Jignesh Gohil described the sea turtle



Figure 1. Dinesh Goswami of PVC addressing the workshop participants

Photo credit: PNC Volunteer



Figure 2. Forest officials making notes during the talks

Photo credit: PNC Volunteer



Figure 3. Demonstration of hatchery management techniques to forest officials

Photo credit: PNC Volunteer

species found in Indian sub-continent, their life cycle and ecology, mass nesting, conservation threats and mortality rates of hatchlings. He also spoke about outreach and conservation awareness and the role that local communities can play in marine turtle conservation.

During a field visit to Mangrol beach, participants were divided into three teams and asked to find turtle nests. Pravin M. Sholanki of Marine National Park, Jamnagar, demonstrated the techniques of tracking flipper marks, locating nests, measuring nest depth and width, measuring substrate temperature, and collecting eggs for incubation at a hatchery. The participants were given demonstrations on operating a GPS and noting the location and time of the nesting event, how to transfer

the eggs to the hatchery (Figure 3), and how to relocate the hatchlings back to sea. Jignesh Gohil described the appropriate care of turtle eggs when in the hatcheries, and the role of temperature in determining hatchling sex. During the two hour field demonstration, three nests and two hatchlings were located. One of hatchlings was relocated to the nearby hatchery while the other one, being healthy, was released back into the sea.

With a vote of thanks by Mr. R.D. Vansh, Range Forest Officer Mangrol, this one day workshop on hatchery management practices came to an end.

*The report is based on details provided by Mr. Jignesh Gohil of Prakruti Nature Club, Kodinar, Gujarat. ■

PHOTO OF INTEREST



By-Catch Net Release of a green juvenile in Watamu Marine Park marking our 10,000th sea turtle release!

The Local Ocean Trust's 'By-Catch Net Release Programme' have now released over 10,000 sea turtles back into the wild, many of which would have been slaughtered for their meat, oil and carapace. This magnificent achievement would not have been possible without the continued support from the local fishing communities, who we in turn support through our Conservation Education and Community Outreach & Awareness programmes that all work hand in hand together. We would like to thank our core funders African Fund for Endangered Wildlife (AFEW) & Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund (DWCF) for their long term support that has helped us to achieve such a monumental goal.

Photo credit: Local Ocean Trust: Watamu Turtle Watch