

Role within the network:

Alacrity is happy to be a member of TAG. With our aim to conserve the olive ridley turtles in the area, in addition to horseshoe crabs, dolphins and the habitats they utilise, we hope to benefit from the experience of others who are part of this national network.

We are willing to contribute to the network's growth by providing information on sea turtles in the area, and keeping members informed of our activities.

Contributed by Kalpana Mallik, Chief Functionary, Alacrity.

Contact information:

Kalpana Mallik, Alacrity.

Postal address:

ALACRITY, At/PO: Kapaleswar, District:
Kendrapada, Orissa

Phone: +91 6727 220792; 221792

Email: alacrity34@yahoo.co.in; kalpanamallik@gmail.com

Podampeta Ecotourism and Olive Ridley Protection Club
Orissa

Background of the organisation:

The Podampeta Ecotourism and Olive Ridley Protection Club was founded in 2008. 12 people from the village of Podampeta came together to form the organisation with the mission to conserve olive ridley turtles that visit the beaches of Podampeta and Rushikulya. Most of the members of the organisation were previously working independently or with other NGOs and the Forest Department. These members decided to involve the local community in their conservation efforts and approached the self-help groups in the village. Currently, the membership of the organisation includes the founding members along with 10 representatives of women's self-help groups in the area.

Where we work:

The organisation carries out its awareness activities in Podampeta and surrounding villages of Rushikulya in Orissa. Sea turtle conservation activities are carried out along the Rushikulya coastline.

Support for the organisation:

Currently, all financial support for the organisation comes through voluntary contributions from members. We hope to soon have the support of the Forest Department and government and other funding agencies to expand our activities.

Activities:

The problems that face the particular stretch of coastline that Podampeta Ecotourism and Olive Ridley Protection Club addresses are not unique to the area but are common across many stretches along Orissa and the rest of the country. Threats to nesting turtles and eggs/hatchlings include poaching by people and predation by stray dogs and crabs. To address these particular problems, we carry out awareness programmes that inform people in nearby villages regarding the importance of turtles to the coastal ecosystem and the illegality of such activities. Ignorance of the importance of conservation is the primary cause for destruction of turtle nests and habitats at the local scale. Volunteers also patrol the beach at nights during the nesting



and hatching season to protect the turtles and nests from dogs and other predators. During the hatching season, hatchling counts are regularly conducted.

The awareness activities of the organisation are geared towards informing people about the need for protecting beaches and using appropriate fishing nets, and cooperation from the local community is sought in order to make conservation programmes successful. We regularly conduct beach clean-up programmes in which we involve children from local schools.

The threat of beach erosion and its impact on nesting beaches has been profound in the area. A village that was part of Podampeta lost most of its land due to rising sea levels and almost 50 families had to be relocated. While government support for such relocation has been present, the root causes of beach erosion have not been addressed.

Plans for the future:

We would like to be able to take our awareness programmes to other villages beyond Podampeta. In order to effectively protect nesting turtles and the eggs/hatchlings, we would like to involve more people, especially women, through sensitisation and creating awareness. However, in order to expand and enhance our activities, we would require additional funds as voluntary service from the local community is hard to come by.

Role within the network:

Being a member of TAG provides an opportunity for groups working across the country to be able to identify common problems and try to come up with solutions collectively in opposed to doing so in isolation. We hope to be able to join others in collaborative programmes for sea turtle protection, and find solutions to larger scale problems that have impacts on the local scale, and most of which smaller organisations such as ours attempt to tackle.

We would like to share our experiences with others and hope to benefit from their advice and the lessons they have learned on the field in carrying out their own activities. This strength in numbers will surely go a long way in influencing conservation action throughout the country.

Contributed by D. Jogendra, Volunteer, Podampeta Ecotourism and Olive Ridley Protection Club.

Contact information:

B. Himanshu, Secretary, Podampeta Ecotourism and Olive Ridley Protection Club.

Postal address:

Podampeta P.O., Via Humma
Ganjam District – 761027, Orissa
Phone: +91 9938436368 (Jogendra)