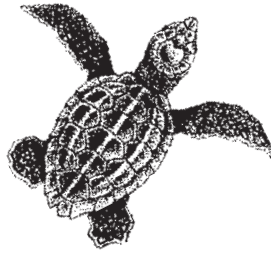


TURTLE



TIDES

Official Newsletter of the Sea Turtle Survival League's Sea Turtle Kids Club

CREATURE FEATURE

This issue's featured species: *The Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle*

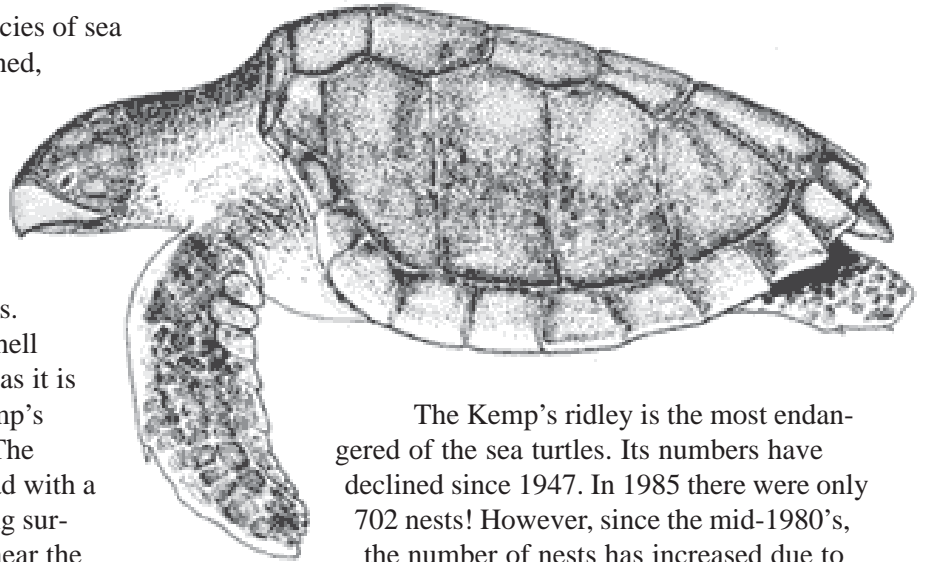
Although six of the world's seven species of sea turtles are listed as endangered or threatened, the Kemp's ridley turtle (Scientific name: *Lepidochelys kempii*) is the rarest of all sea turtles. It is also smaller than any other sea turtle species, weighing 85 to 110 pounds when full grown. In comparison, the leatherback turtle can sometimes weigh as much as 2,000 pounds.

The adult Kemp's ridley has an oval shell (called a carapace) that is almost as wide as it is long and is usually olive-gray in color. Kemp's ridley hatchlings are black on both sides. The Kemp's ridley has a triangular-shaped head with a somewhat hooked beak with large crushing surfaces. This turtle feeds in shallow water near the shore and mostly eats crabs and other shellfish.

The Kemp's ridley is found in the Gulf of Mexico and along the Atlantic coast of North America. Most Kemp's ridleys nest on one main beach along the Gulf coast of Mexico. A very small number of Kemp's ridleys also nest at Padre Island National Seashore, Texas.

Hatchlings, after leaving the nesting beach, are believed to swim out to water currents in the Gulf of Mexico; some drift with the currents into the Atlantic Ocean. Once they grow larger, they are found in the shallow waters of lagoons, estuaries and off the coast of the United States.

The name 'ridley' may have come from the word *riddle*. For a very long time, the Kemp's ridley was a mystery to scientists because no one could figure out where the little turtles laid their eggs. Then, one day in 1963, a man named Dr. Archie Carr saw a film made by someone who had visited a beach in Mexico in 1947. Dr. Carr was very surprised to find that the film showed thousands of Kemp's ridleys nesting on one small stretch of beach! Almost 42,000 turtles nested that year in what is called an *arribada* (which means 'arrival' in Spanish).

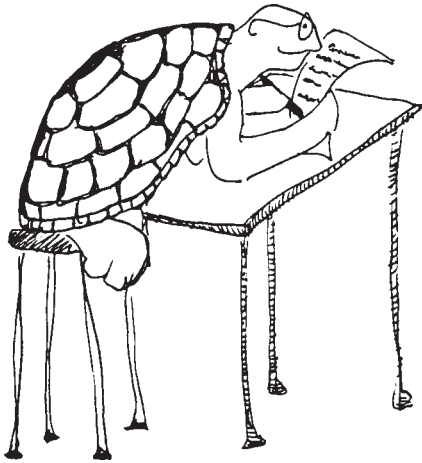


The Kemp's ridley is the most endangered of the sea turtles. Its numbers have declined since 1947. In 1985 there were only 702 nests! However, since the mid-1980's, the number of nests has increased due to extensive conservation measures in Mexico and the United States and the requirement for shrimp fishermen to use Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) in their nets. TEDs act as an "escape door" so a turtle can easily swim out if it gets caught in a shrimp net. This simple device saves thousands of sea turtles every year. During recent years more than 7,000 nests have been deposited on the Mexican nesting beach, the nesting population is now increasing.

Kemp's ridleys still face many dangers in their ocean home. Some still drown in shrimp or fishing nets that do not have TEDs, others mistake floating pieces of plastic as food, and some are injured by offshore oil drilling equipment and oil spills.

Even if you don't live near an ocean, you can still help save the Kemp's ridley by telling your friends and family about what you've learned about sea turtles and TEDs and by helping keep the oceans free of plastics and pollution. Keep reading *Turtle Tides* to learn more about the amazing world of sea turtles!

TURTLE TIDES



Are you doing something cool that relates to sea turtles and their habitats?

If you, your family and friends, your school or the people in your community are doing something to help save sea turtles, please let me know about it!

Send me your artwork, letters, photos and poems. I may not be able to return them, but I'll print many of them in the Turtle Tides Newsletter. Please include your name, age and address and mail it to:

**Turtle Tides Editor
4424 NW 13th St
Ste B-11
Gainesville, FL 32609**

**or send an email to:
kimberly@ccturtle.org**

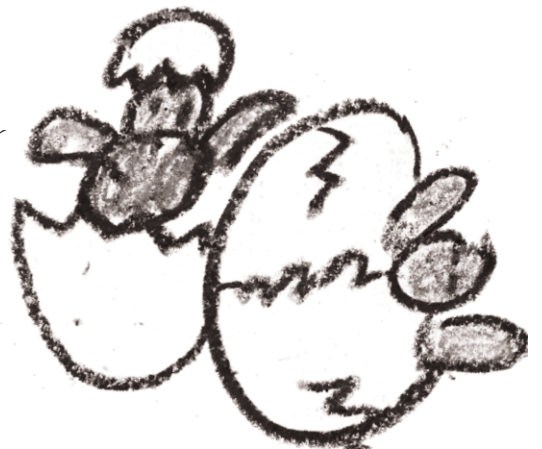
Thanks!!

Turtle Art



A special thanks to Hytr5 (her nickname) from New York for submitting artwork! She sent in numerous pictures of sea turtles including a large green sea turtle on the envelope! I was so excited to open the letter. Thanks again for your beautiful pictures!

*Kimberly Johnson
Turtle Tides Editor*





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The Sea Turtle Survival League and Sea Turtle KidsClub are programs of the non-profit Caribbean Conservation Corporation. Founded in 1959, the Caribbean Conservation Corporation is the world's oldest sea turtle research and conservation organization.

~ Making Waves ~

You can make waves! To try it, you'll need:

- A clear plastic bottle (a small soft drink bottle will do!)
- White vinegar
- Green and blue food coloring
- Vegetable oil
- Heavy tape (duct tape or electrical)

1. Remove the labels from the clear plastic bottle.
2. Fill the bottle half full of white vinegar.

3. Add drops of green and blue food coloring until you create a brilliant shade.
4. Fill the bottle to the top with vegetable oil. Squeeze the bottle to remove any air bubbles.
5. Screw the lid on the bottle and seal it with heavy tape.

Surf's up!

Now you can make waves by rocking the bottle from side to side. That's too cool!

COLORING CONTEST!

Win a CCC Tote Bag! Just color this aquatic scene with crayons, pencils or markers. The winner will receive a free CCC Tote Bag and have their winning entry printed in the next issue of the *Velador*. Send your artwork, name, age and address to the *Turtle Tides* Editor by July 31, 2007.



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Caribbean Conservation Corporation

Sea Turtle KidsClub

4424 NW 13th Street, Suite B-11

Gainesville, FL 32609

(352) 373-6441 | www.cccturtle.org