



# OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

*Protecting Sea Turtles and Their Habitats*



**NEWS FROM THE FIELD:  
OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2021**

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# ABOUT THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT



**The Olive Ridley Project (ORP) is a UK registered charity established in 2013. Our mission is to protect sea turtles and their habitats.**

ORP operates in several regions of the Indian Ocean including the Maldives, Kenya, Oman, Pakistan and Seychelles. We focus on rescue and rehabilitation, scientific research, and education and outreach to achieve our mission. We run a Marine Turtle Rescue Centre and a Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre in the Maldives. We are a team of turtle biologists, veterinarians and conservationists that use our knowledge to safeguard sea turtles and their habitats.

## OUR RESEARCH

**We have one of the largest sea turtle-ID and ghost net databases in the Indian Ocean.**

**Our research areas include:**

- Biogeography (population dynamics)
  - Reproductive biology
  - Population ecology
  - Threats to sea turtles
  - Sea turtle conservation
  - Sea turtle veterinary science



## OUR PARTNERS



We have partnered with resorts, organisations and local NGOs to host our rescue and rehabilitation centres and research teams, and to maximise the effectiveness of our reach in local communities. We would like to extend our gratitude for their backing, help, and support.



**OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT**

Registered Charity in the UK #1165905





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The last months of the year came with many exciting and new opportunities as the ORP Team continues to grow. Towards the end of the year new biologists took up their position in Raa Atoll, at a second base in North Malé Atoll and we started a new chapter on Felicité Island in the Seychelles! Additionally, we prepared to reinstate our Oman project in early 2022 as the country's borders have opened up again.

In the Maldives we continued our efforts in the Red List Working Group Marine Reptiles, and are now leading the hawksbill assessment as well in collaboration with the Environmental Protection Agency.

The end of the year brought excellent news from Laamu Atoll, where six new Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) were designated, including the sea turtle nesting beach at Gaadhoo Island! We will further support the development of the respective management plans for these areas in the upcoming year.

ORP Team Kenya had a busy quarter with 50 new turtles identified and many meetings engaging with conservation groups and local communities, including binational strategy meetings from Tanzania and Kenya.

In Q4 a total of 9 ghost nets were reported, with a mass report in the middle of December from North Malé. A total of 13 injured turtles, including four

hawksbills and nine olive ridleys, which fits perfectly with the average reported from the previous years.

Our Sea Turtle Photo-ID project continues to progress nicely. We recorded a total of 126 new individuals in the Maldives (108 hawksbill and 18 green turtles), slightly less than last quarter. In Kenya, 322 sightings were recorded, with 46 new green turtles and 4 new hawksbills being added to the database.

During the last three month of 2021 twelve turtle nests were laid in the Maldives: five in Lhaviyani and seven in Laamu atoll. All of these were green turtle nests. A total of nine nests hatched, resulting in another 945 sea turtle hatchlings making their way into the big blue.

In Pakistan, we recovered 50 kg of ghost gear from beaches and the sea. Ghost leash and ghost net bracelet production continued.

Our e-learning platform continues to do well with 115 new students enrolled in Q4. In total we now have 73 e-Turtle School graduates and 53 Sea Turtle Science and Conservation graduates. A total of 670 students have signed up for our online courses.

We are also very happy to announce the publication of another scientific research papers written by ORP scientists and researchers.

*- Dr. Stephanie Köhnk, Senior Scientist*





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# MALDIVES

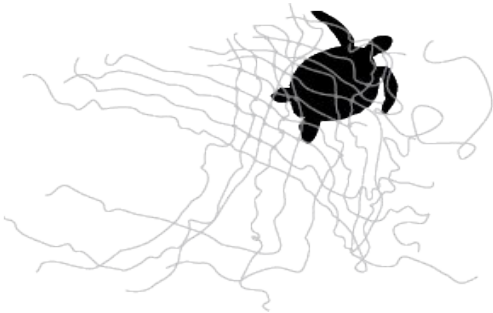
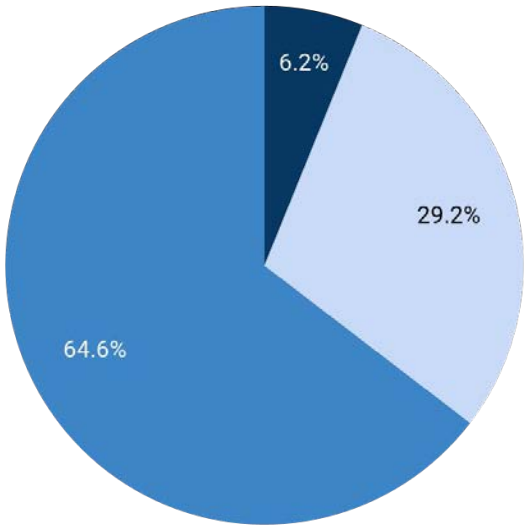




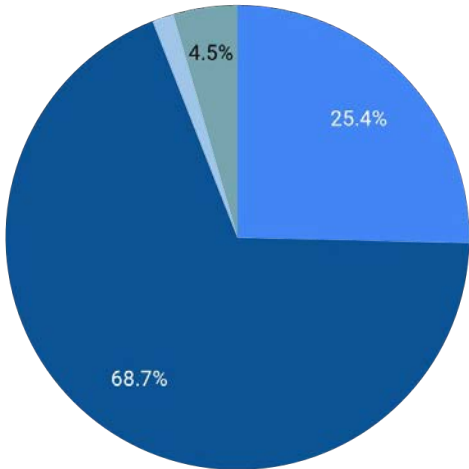


# STRANDED TURTLES REPORTED - MALDIVES

Found Dead   Released immediately   Transferred to rescue centres



Floating   Entangled   Boat Strike   Stranded

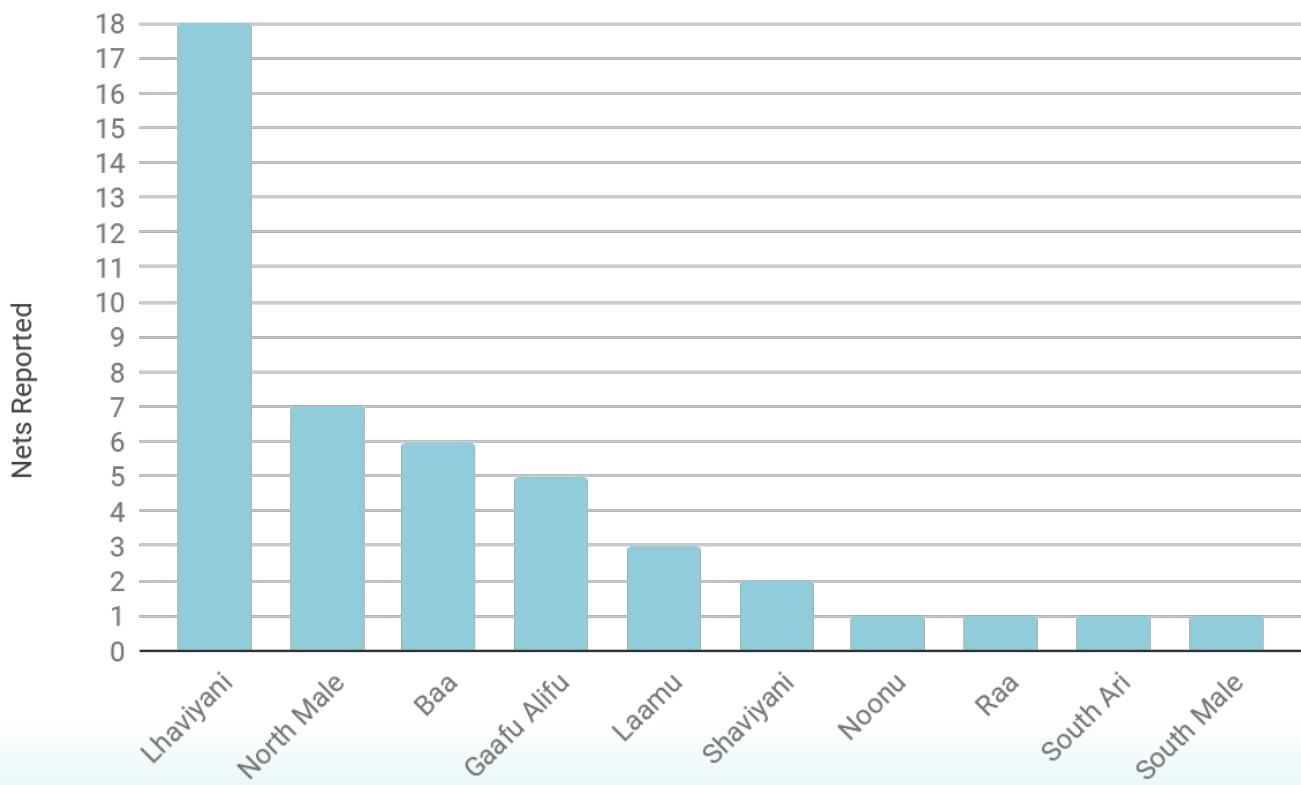


Species	This Quarter	This Year	Since Project Began
Olive Ridley	9	52	910
Green	0	1	31
Hawksbill	4	13	95
Unknown	0	1	3
Total	13	67	1041

A ghost net recovered in December 2021 in North Male Atoll



## GHOST NET REPORTS



## GHOST NETS REMOVED - MALDIVES

	This Quarter	This Year	Since Project Began
Ghost Net Conglomerates Removed	4	45	542*

*\*This number was corrected to include only ghost nets from the Maldives. Previous counts included other areas of the Indian Ocean as well.*



## TURTLE RESCUE & REHABILITATION

As expected, this quarter started quite calmly with very few calls about entangled patients, allowing us to focus on the care of the remaining few. During this quiet time, we were really able to focus on the ongoing rehabilitation of our longest term patient, Azura, resulting in her release after 2 years, 8 months and 11 days! This is such an amazing achievement and we are so proud of her and all the ORP team, past and present who helped her get to this stage!

As the weather started to transition and finally settled in the North East Monsoon season, everything exploded into activity. We received 12 calls about entangled turtles in only 48 hours, as huge amounts of ghost gear started to wash into the Maldives with the changed currents, specifically to North Malé Atoll. We admitted seven new patients this quarter and released three. Unfortunately we also lost two.

Thankfully many of the other entangled turtles reported were not injured and could be released straight away.

We are very grateful to all the individuals, resorts and organisations who help us rescue injured sea turtles and bring them to the Rescue Centre, and who further collaborate with us to remove and disposed of the ghost gear, and record data for our research.

Surgeries and procedures performed this quarter include partial flipper amputations and extensive daily wound care.

Our team continue to live-stream feeding of our patients every Sunday to growing success and engagement; a lot of former guests and volunteers really enjoy the chance to revisit the Rescue Centre and join in once more.

*-Dr Minnie Liddell, Resident Veterinarian*





## TURTLE PATIENTS

	This Quarter	This Year	Since Project Began
New Patients Admitted	7	33	164
Patients Treated	7	37	164
Turtles Released	3	18	92
Turtles Deceased	2	11	57
Patients Still in Care (ORP only)	7		

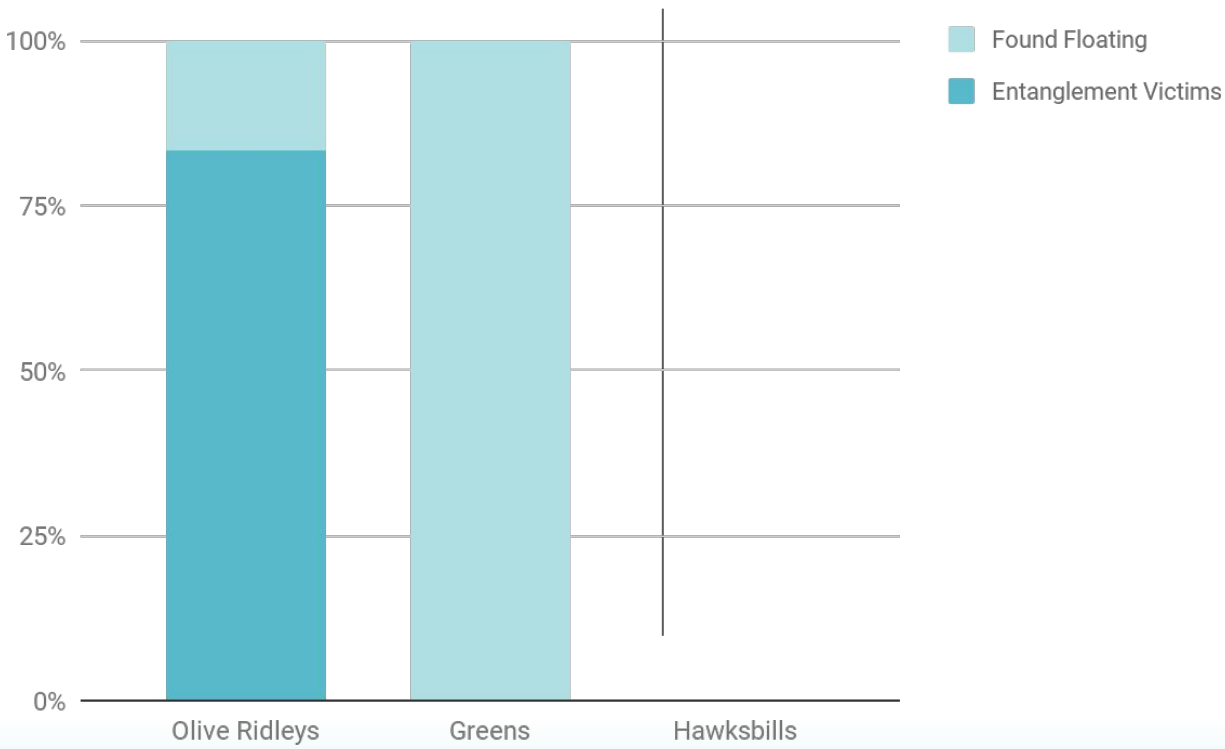
## TURTLE ADOPTIONS

	This Quarter	This Year	Since Project Began
Patient Adoptions	65	322	1,077
Maldives Adoptions*	61	177	588
Kenya Adoptions	6	18	118
Famous Turtle Adoptions	18	41	108

*\*Does not include 70 turtles adopted by Patina in 2021*



# CURRENT TURTLE PATIENTS REASON FOR ADMITTANCE



**Figure 1.** Reason for admittance by species



Olive ridley turtles make up 79% of all patients  
Patients requiring flipper amputation (this quarter): 1  
Average length of stay (all patients): 67 days



# CURRENT TURTLE PATIENTS



Heidi



Discovery



Xena



Tibby



Pickle



Biscuit



Loabi

New Patients at MTRCs: Pickle, Jingle, Biscuit, Loabi

New Patients at One&Only rehabilitation centre: Kaamil, patient 158, patient 161

Released: Azura, Kaamil and patient 161

Transferred to rehabilitation (One&Only): Tibby

Deceased: Patient 158, Jingle

## INTERNSHIPS, VOLUNTEERS, AND VISITING VETS

ORP's internship program for Maldivian nationals at the Rescue Centre is an important aspect of our mission to build local capacity to care for injured sea turtles. The program is paid and open to anyone above 18 with an interest in sea turtle conservation and husbandry, with a typical duration of three to four months.

This quarter, we said farewell to our intern Shah as he moved onto a marine biology role at another resort. We welcomed new intern Ni, a passionate photographer, traveller, surfer and conservationist who has been an incredible addition to the team with her drive, passion and diverse skill set.

Since 2017 we have hosted a total of 15 interns many of whom, we are very pleased to report, have continued on in the marine conservation field. Including within government, in other NGOs and at resorts as marine biologists and educators. We are also working on getting the internship accredited

so that our interns can leave not only with a wealth of experience, but also a formal qualification to assist them in their future careers.

We restarted the [Rescue Centre Volunteer Program](#) in January this year after an 8 month hiatus due to the pandemic. The volunteers are incredibly helpful in running the Rescue Centre and we truly value their wonderful contributions. This quarter we started welcoming three volunteers at a time for some slots to assist in our busiest periods. We have hosted 11 volunteers hailing from Switzerland, England, Germany and Canada.

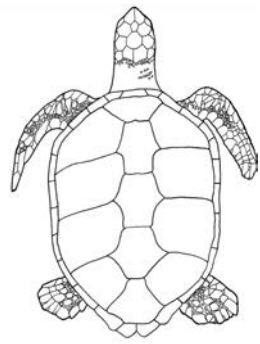
We have also resumed our [Visiting Veterinarian Program](#) but due to ongoing travel restrictions, the majority of our visiting vets postponed until 2022. We have a very busy next year lined up with vets visiting from all around the world!

*-Dr Claire Petros, Lead Veterinarian &  
Dr Minnie Liddell, ORP Resident Veterinarian*



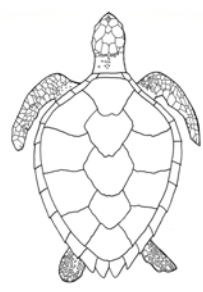


**TURTLE SIGHTINGS & NEW INDIVIDUALS MALDIVES**



**GREENS**

**Total Sightings: 9,158**  
**Total Individuals: 1,171**



**HAWKSBILLS**

**Total Sightings: 20,160**  
**Total Individuals: 4,080**

	This Quarter	This Year	Since Project Began
Total Number of Turtle Sightings	725	3,196	29,318
Total Number of New Individuals	146	454	5,251
Overall Growth in Sightings	2.5%	10.9%	N/A



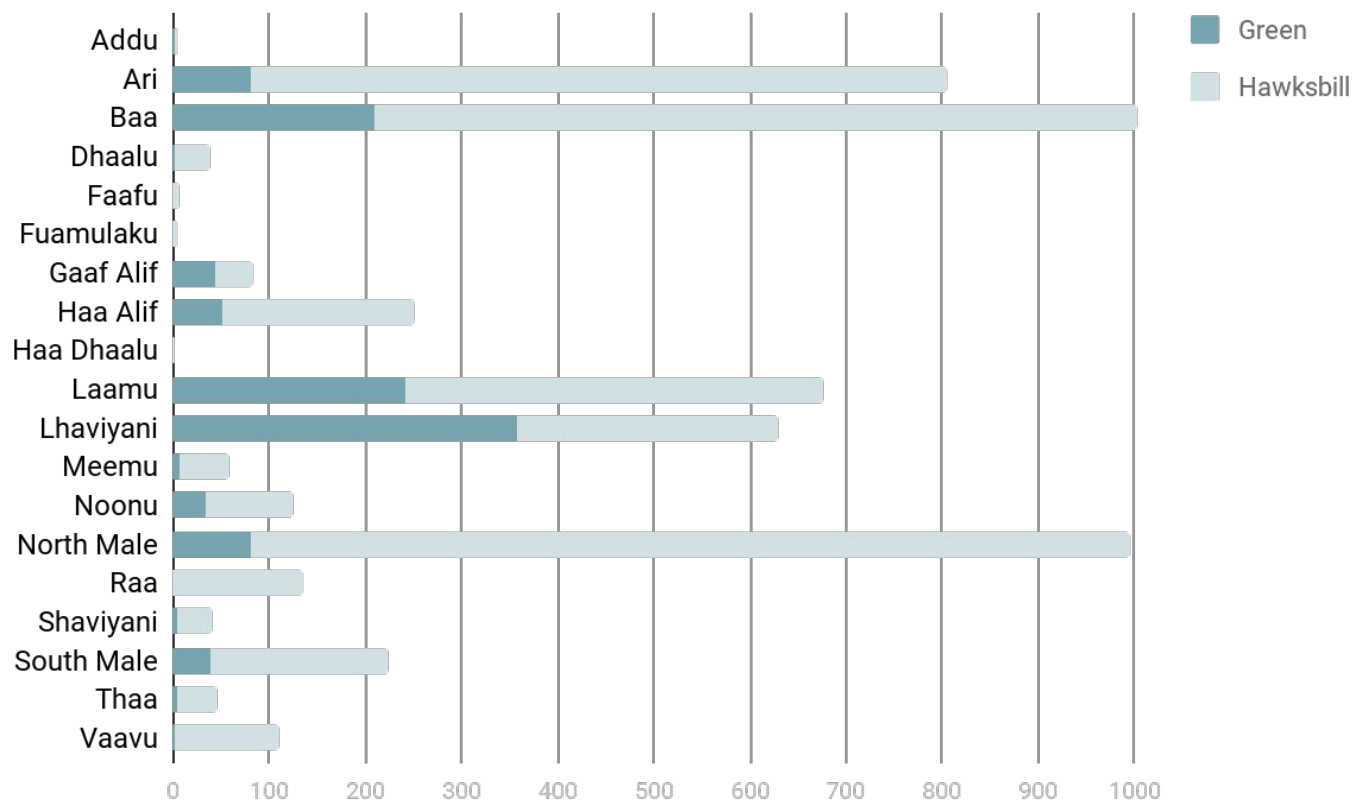
GR1085, Hithadhoo West in Laamu Atoll

## TURTLES IN MALDIVES

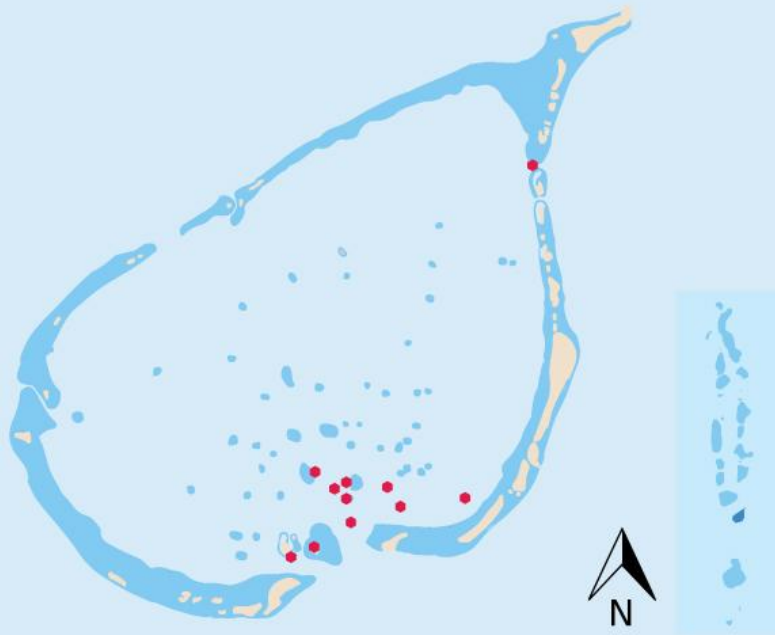
This quarter, Baa Atoll has passed the total number of 1000 identified individual turtles and is now 1003! Of these, 209 are green turtles and 794 critically endangered hawksbills. A close second is North Male Atoll, with 996 individual turtles, 914 of which are hawksbill turtles and 82 greens. Ari Atoll is the home to over 806 known turtles in total, with 725 hawksbills and 81 greens.

The largest number of green turtles can still be found in Lhaviyani (359) and Laamu Atoll (243). Both atolls also have a resident hawksbill population with 271 and 434 individuals respectively.

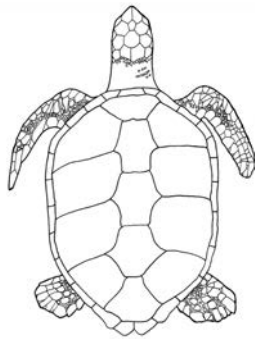
The large number of resorts in the central atolls, as well as a relatively consistent effort by our team members in certain atolls has resulted in better data coverage there. The northern and southern atolls still have few turtles photographed and we greatly appreciate all submissions from citizen scientists.





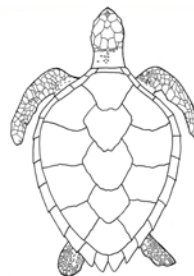


## LAAMU ATOLL, MALDIVES



### GREENS

**Total Sightings: 2,882**  
**Total Individuals: 243**



### HAWKSBILLS

**Total Sightings: 2,170**  
**Total Individuals: 434**

	This Quarter	This Year	Since Project Began
Total Number of Turtle Sightings	283	969	5052
Total Number of New Individuals	25	85	677
Overall Growth in Sightings	5.6%	19.2%	N/A



## LAAMU ATOLL

ORP renewed its partnership with Six Senses Laamu for the upcoming year, establishing a plan for the continuing and new projects in Laamu Atoll. Nesting and photo-ID data collection remain a priority in the atoll.

ORP's Senior Scientist, Dr Stephanie Köhnk, visited in December and conducted on-site training for the sea turtle biologist, including, how to collect data on turtle behavior in the water and setting up temperature loggers for the nests.

Nesting continued in the final quarter of the year, with a total of 26 nests laid at Six Senses Laamu during the year. Seven nests were laid during this quarter, whilst eight different nests hatched. Nests in December hatched around the 62nd day, which is longer than the Laamu average incubation period of 57 days.

ORP made changes to the nest monitoring and hatching protocols at Six Senses Laamu, bringing back the physical Nestwatch Team. Volunteers conducted over 160 hours of

nestwatch for the last four hatchings of the year, staying vigilant for the first signs of hatching.

MUI's annual Laamafaru Festival took place on eight different islands in Laamu Atoll, reaching over 1,609 people in the atoll. Students raised awareness on the plight of sea turtles and called for their protection during festive activities. ORP provided support to the MUI team in developing the festival.

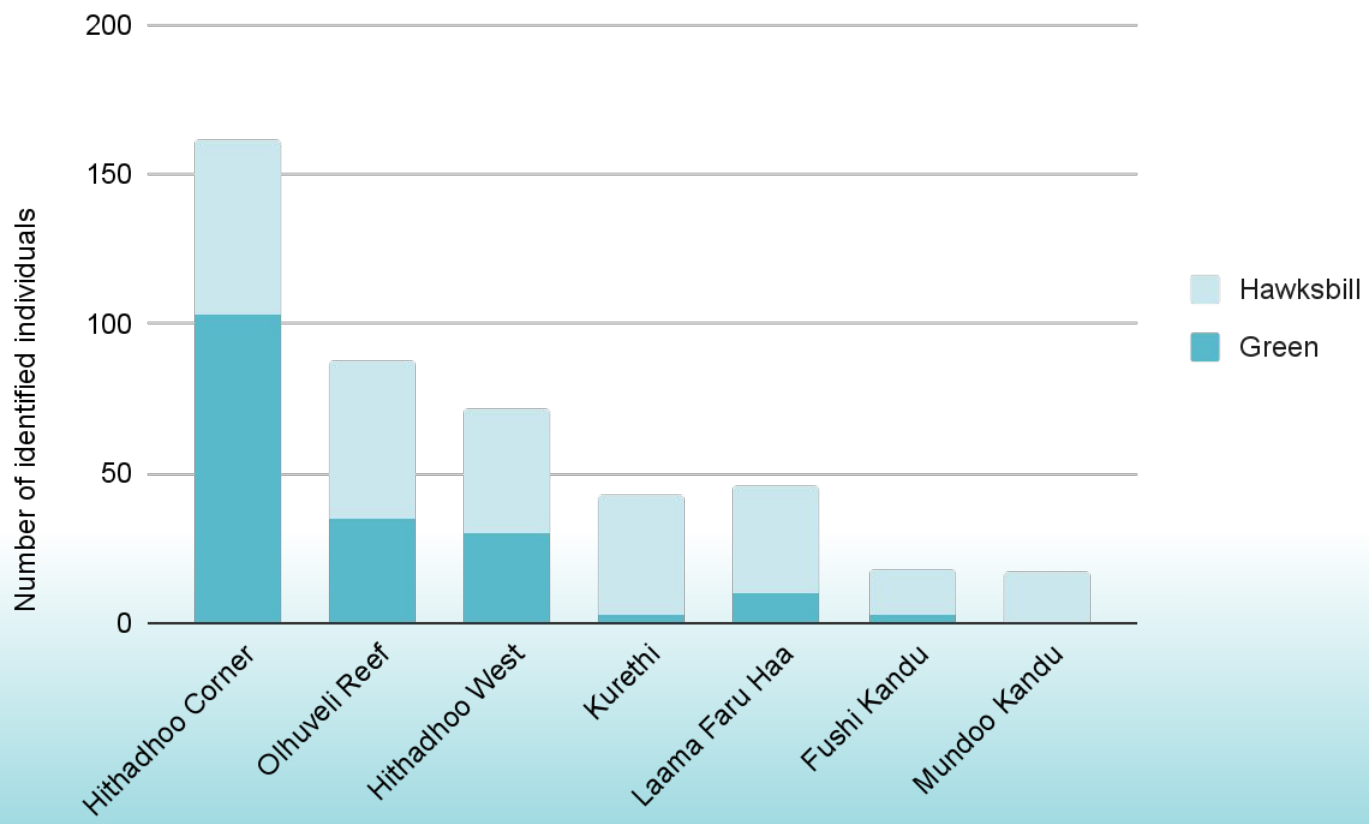
We also continued our work to protect L. Gaadhoo with stakeholders in MUI and the government. In December 2021 the government announced the designation of L. Gaadhoo's nesting beach, its seagrass meadows and reefs as marine protected areas due to its significance for turtle nesting.

*-Isha Afeef, ORP Sea Turtle Biologist,  
Laamu Atoll*





# TURTLE SIGHTINGS & NEW INDIVIDUALS: LAAMU ATOLL





(Left) ORP’s senior scientist Dr. Stephanie Köhnk gave an overview of ORP’s research to 55 guests at Six Senses Laamu. The talk, ‘Sea Turtle Research in the Maldives: What we know and what we don’t know’ summarised the findings of ORP’s work in the past eight years, and highlighted the data gaps that we’re working to fill. During Stephanie’s visit we also conducted a nesting survey of Gaadhoo and found that 100% of the recent nests had been poached.

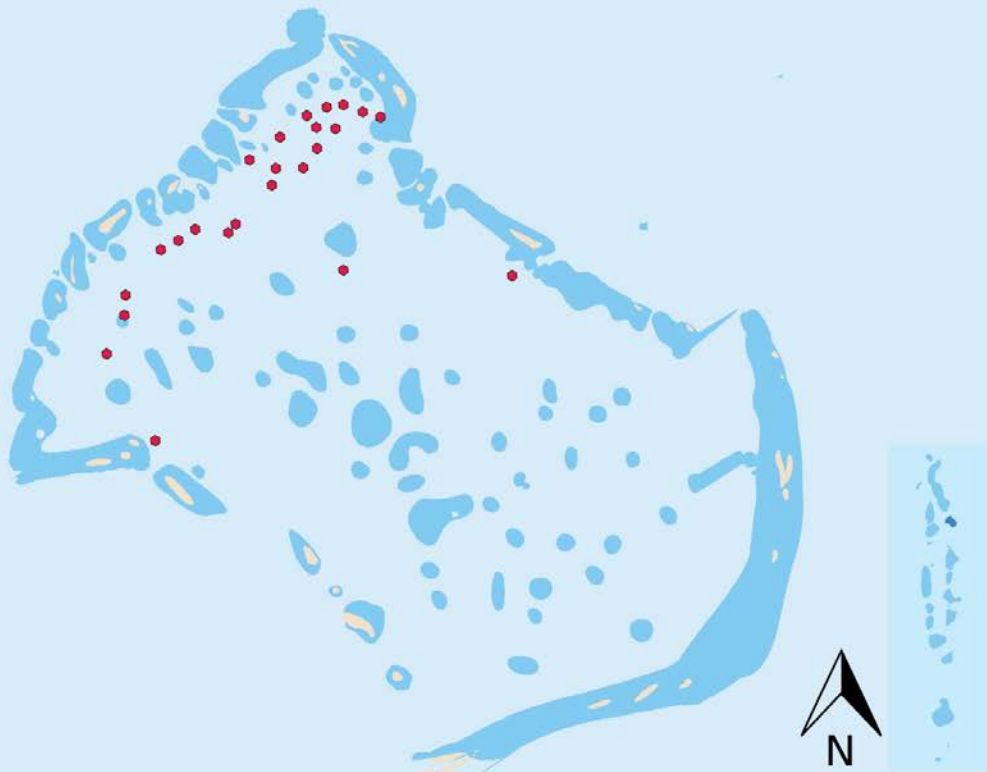
(Right) ORP met with Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology’s Minister Aminath Shauna to discuss the protection of L. Gaadhoo’s nesting beach. In December, the government of the Maldives declared this significant nesting beach a Marine Protected Area; ‘Species/Habitat Management Area’. ORP will continue to work with the government and stakeholders to provide technical and on-site support for management of the area.



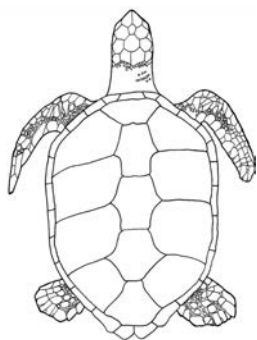
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

	This Quarter	This Year
Hours Spent Surveying	437.8	843.95
Sites Surveyed	21	23
Nests Laid	7	26
Nests Hatched	9	23
Hatchlings Counted	419	1650
Ghost Nets Removed	0	3



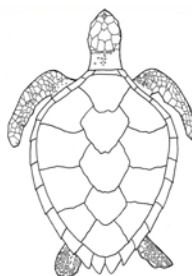


## LHAVIYANI ATOLL, MALDIVES



### GREENS

**Total Sightings: 4,588**  
**Total Individuals: 359**



### HAWKSBILLS

**Total Sightings: 908**  
**Total Individuals: 271**

	This Quarter	This Year	Since Project Began
Total Number of Turtle Sightings	185	1,446	5,496
Total Number of New Individuals	17	97	630
Overall Growth in Sightings	3.4%	26.3%	NA



GR1295, *Pirminus*, is a newly identified juvenile green turtle, often spotted resting in the same bush coral at Kuredu Caves.

## LHAVIYANI ATOLL

This year, our base in Lhaviyani Atoll, Kuredu Island Resort, had a busy nesting season. With a total of sixteen nests laid, this is the highest number in one year since our records began. Of these nests, nine were laid in what was previously considered to be the low season. We look forward to seeing whether this trend in the nesting activity on Kuredu continues into 2022.

The final quarter of 2021 saw the remaining two nests from the low season hatch successfully, both in October, and both with a 95% hatching success. The use of Reolink's donated outdoor night vision security camera allowed for remote monitoring of the nests day and night. Our biologist was therefore able to witness the hatching of both nests and control the scene and guests, who were briefed on the Nesting Beach Code of Conduct before the hatchlings emerged. The positive feedback from guests who have witnessed a nest hatch, and the opportunity to educate and brief them on the important Nesting Beach Code of Conduct, is a strong incentive to continue including guests at hatching events on Kuredu.

Relations with the Atoll Marine Center on the neighbouring island, Kanuhura, have strengthened this quarter. We have provided some training and resources for them and they have agreed to continue sharing their nesting data with ORP. Kanuhura has also had a similarly busy nesting season, with six nests hatching on the small island Jenahura just to their north this quarter.

In the last three months we surveyed seventeen sites across the atoll, recording 197 wild turtle sightings and identifying ten new individuals. Our sea turtle biologist maintains regular communications with dive centres and marine biologists at Lhaviyani Atoll's resorts, however neither ghost gear nor entangled or injured sea turtles were recorded across the atoll this quarter. Between October and December, seventeen wild turtles were named and adopted from Lhaviyani Atoll – we would like to thank everyone who generously supported our work.

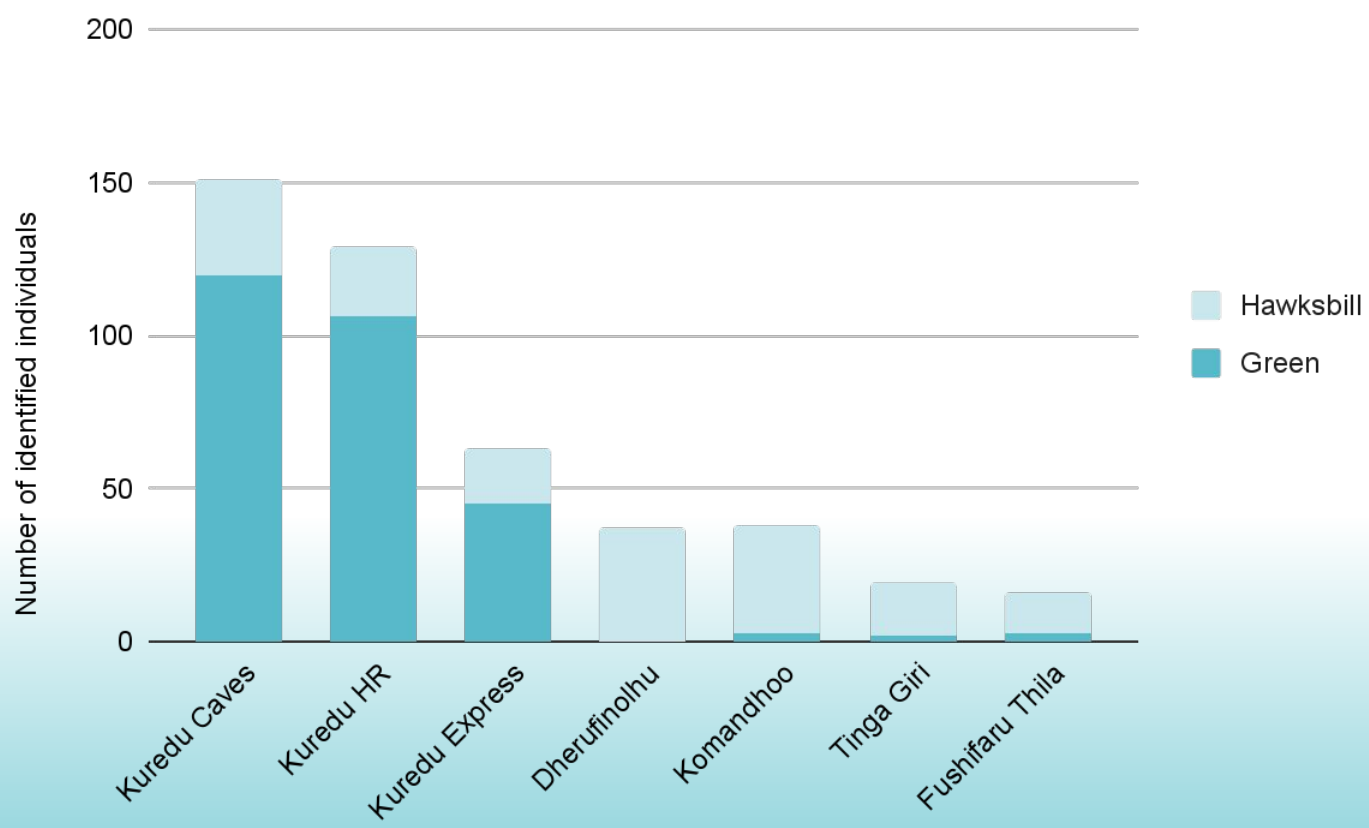
*-Emily Mundy, ORP Sea Turtle Biologist,  
Lhaviyani Atoll*



GR1186, Coco, is one of the small juvenile green turtles resident to Kuredu lagoon



## TURTLE SIGHTINGS & NEW INDIVIDUALS: LHAVIYANI ATOLL



(Right) With Kuredu Island Resort & Spa’s permission, we have posted signs on the island’s two nesting beaches explaining the correct code of conduct to follow when a sea turtle is spotted on the beach. With this initiative we hope to reduce accidental disturbance to nesting females, encourage more nests to be successfully laid, and increase our guest educational outreach.



(Left) The last nest of the quarter, and of the whole year, successfully hatched at the end of October. Thanks to Reolink’s outdoor night vision camera, we can monitor nests remotely and react quickly to any movement . The nest hatched successfully and all the hatchlings made their way to the sea witnessed by several guests who had been helping to check on the nest during their vacation. We brief all guest volunteers on the dangers to hatchlings and the proper code of conduct for behaving around them.

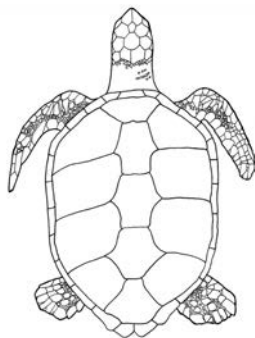
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

	This Quarter	This Year
Hours Spent Surveying	25.75	232.8
Sites Surveyed	17	39
Nests Laid	0	29
Nests Hatched	8	30
Hatchlings Counted	429	1,889
Ghost Nets Removed	0	12



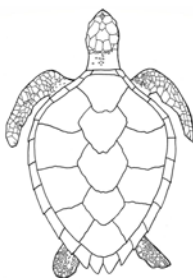


# NORTH MALÉ ATOLL, MALDIVES



GREENS

Total Sightings: 87  
 Total Individuals: 82



HAWKSBILLS

Total Sightings: 10,007  
 Total Individuals: 914

	This Quarter	This Year	Since Project Began
Total Number of Turtle Sightings	112	899	10,094
Total Number of New Individuals	29	89	996
Overall Growth in Sightings	1.1%	8.9%	NA



## NORTH MALÉ ATOLL

In Q4 of 2021 we conducted surveys all over North Malé Atoll, spending around 90 hours in the water. As a result, we added a total of 112 sightings to our database (all hawksbills) and identified 29 new individuals.

Hawksbill turtles tend to be faithful to their 'home' reefs, only leaving to mate or nest. We have identified a number of hawksbill turtles that we see regularly at Makunudhoo reef, including a suspected female called Mona (HK573), who has been seen over 100 times since she was first sighted in 2011!

We have been very busy at the Rehabilitation Centre in the last three months. In early October, Bruce and Amber were transferred from the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre for the final stage of their rehabilitation. They both did amazingly well and we released them within a month of arriving. Tibby was also transferred here on the 29th November to free up space for the busy ghost net season as she no longer requires veterinary care. Tibby has full control of her buoyancy and spends most

of her day resting on the bottom of the rehabilitation tank. However, she is still very weak in the open water and struggles on her sea swims.

In early December we received three new turtle patients in two days; an adult male olive ridley, who unfortunately passed away, and 2 juvenile olive ridleys who just needed a little time to overcome some buoyancy issues. They were both released soon after they arrived.

While out surveying sea turtles, our biologist witnessed two hawksbill turtles demonstrating 'grooming' behaviour. This is something that is rarely witnessed as sea turtles are considered to be solitary animals. We plan to investigate this behaviour further and find out if sea turtles actually demonstrate social behaviour and have complex social structures – an unknown phenomenon until now.

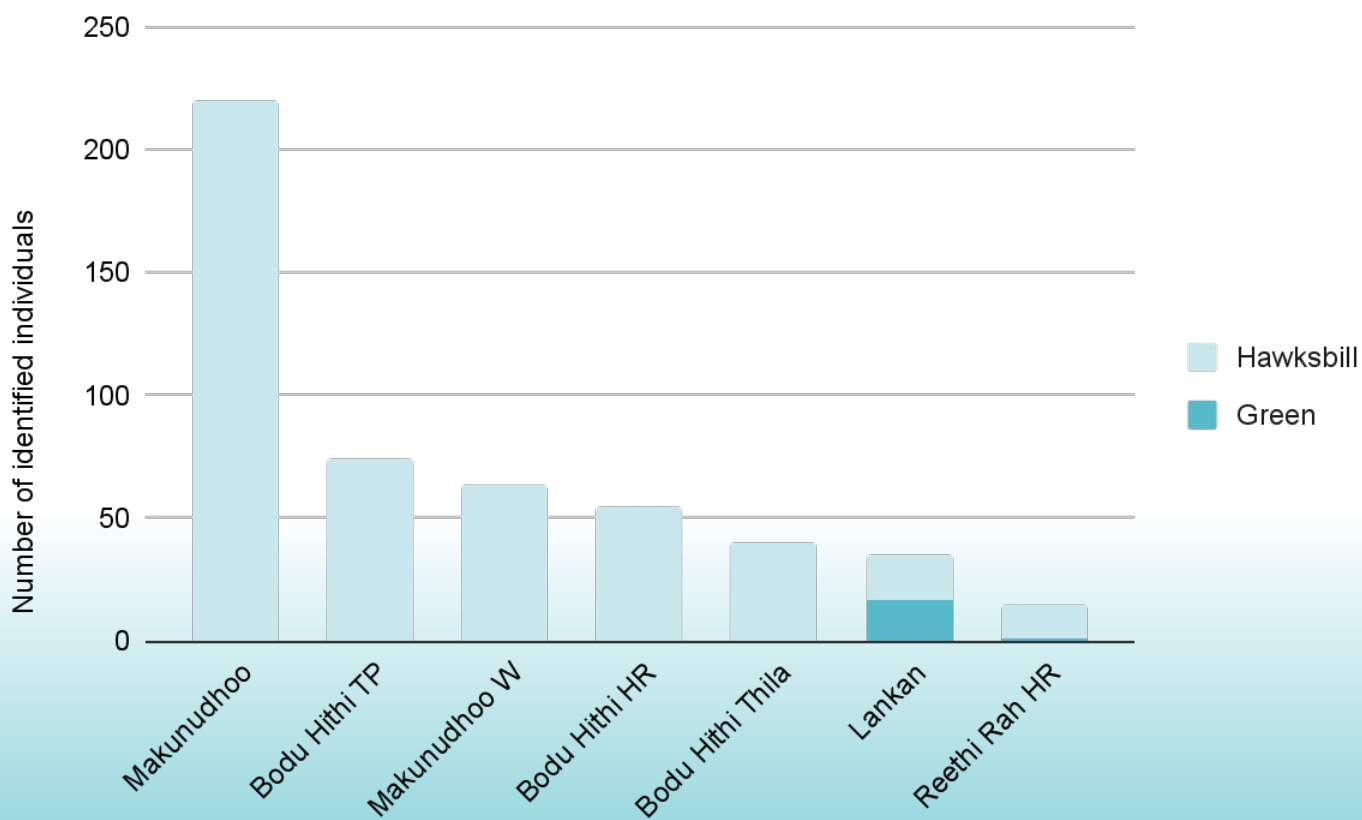
*-Joe Rigby, ORP Sea Turtle Biologist,  
North Malé Atoll*



Sid, one of our long term residents in North Male



# TURTLE SIGHTINGS & NEW INDIVIDUALS: NORTH MALÉ ATOLL



# NORTH MALÉ



(Left) The change of the monsoon season in early December also changed the direction of the current. Now coming from the northeast direction, it brings with it a lot of ghost gear to the Maldives. Our team in North Malé recovered more than 500 kg in one day! With the help of our resort partner One & Only, Reethi Rah, we go on weekly expeditions with the aim to recover as much ghost gear as possible and rescue any sea turtles or other wildlife that have become entangled.

(Right) Our Turtle Biologist Joe also spent a week with two young children from Dubai, teaching them all about turtles and why the work we do is so important. He showed them how we feed, clean and treat our rehabilitation patients to prepare them for life back in the ocean. They also learnt all about the importance of coral reefs, sharks and turtles to the health of our oceans and how climate change is already having negative effects on a number of species.



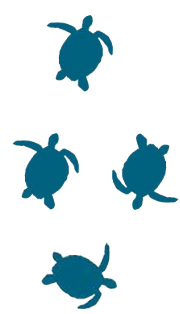
## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

	This Quarter	This Year
Hours Spent Surveying	90	350
Sites Surveyed	8	14
Nests Laid	0	4
Nests Hatched	0	4
Hatchlings Counted	0	395
Ghost Nets Removed	8	16

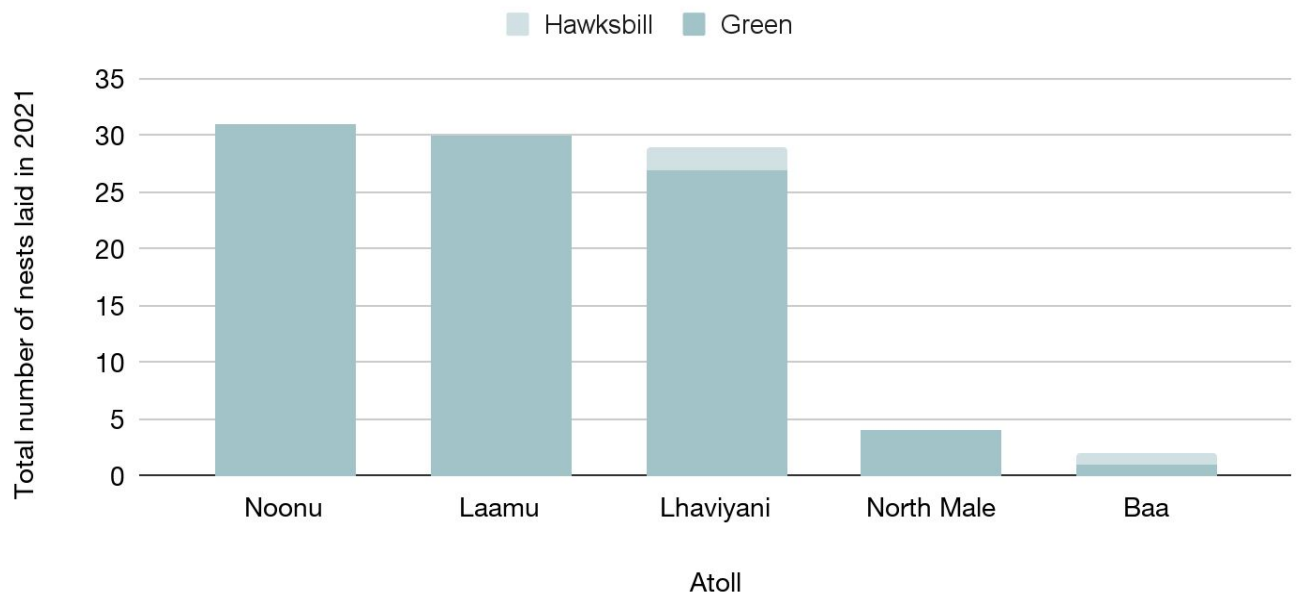




# RECORDED SEA TURTLE NESTING ACTIVITY



	This Quarter	This Year
True Nests Laid	13	96
False Crawls	2	54
Nests Hatched	12	34
Live Hatchlings Counted	945	2,807
Average Hatching Success	64.6%	71.0%
Average Incubation Time	60.8 days	58.0 days





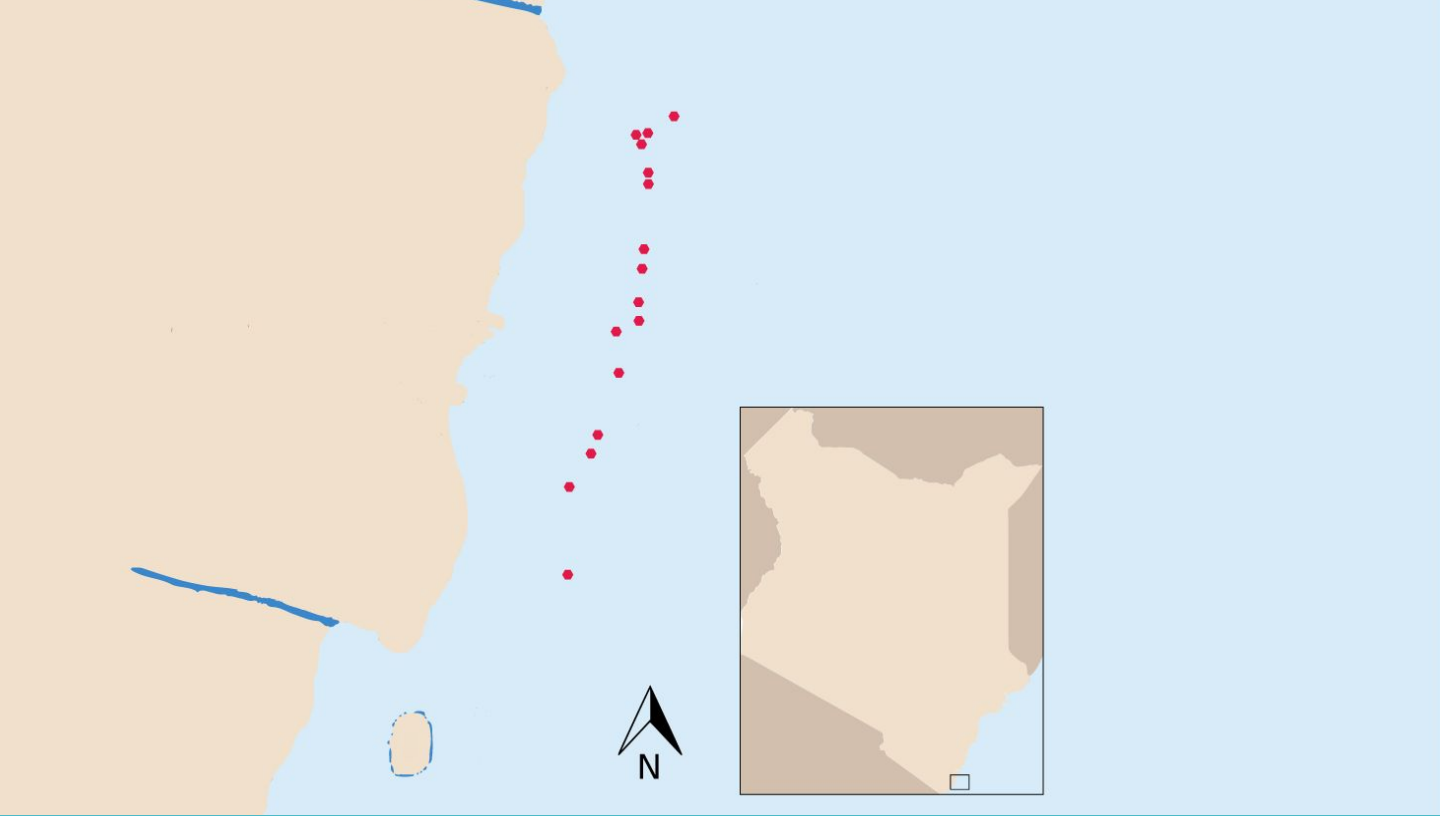
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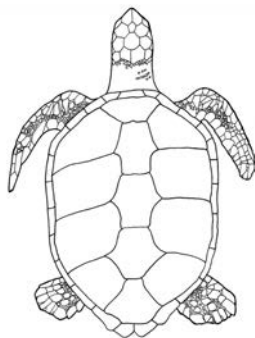
# KENYA





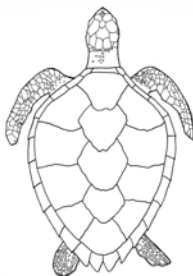


DIANI BEACH, KENYA



GREENS

Total Sightings: 2,661  
Total Individuals: 592



HAWKSBILLS

Total Sightings: 350  
Total Individuals: 75

	This Quarter	This Year	Since Project Began
Total Number of Turtle Sightings	322	722	3,011
Total Number of New Individuals	50	144	719
Overall Growth in Sightings	10.7%	24.0%	N/A



G356 Female green turtle from Kisima

## DIANI BEACH

In the last quarter of the year, our team in Kenya conducted a total of 58 diving surveys, including one dive at Kisite Mpunguti Marine Reserve, and one snorkel survey. Our surveys yielded a total of 288 green and 34 hawksbill turtle sightings with 50 new sea turtles added to the database (46 greens and four hawksbills)!

We also focused on consultative meetings and community outreach programs conducted by government entities and local conservation groups such as:

- A consultative stakeholders meeting on the proposed transboundary conservation area with the main objective to find ways on how to manage resources between Kenya and Tanzania. This was funded by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Blue Action and WIOMSA and hosted by Kenya Wildlife Service and Co-hosted by WIOMSA and held at Kaskazi resort.
- A reporting workshop funded by Rufford foundation and SOA and organised by ERACOMA and Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS). It was attended by local turtle conservation teams and

Technical University of Mombasa students and Pwani University on research done along the south coast of Kenya. Everyone in attendance was awarded as a turtle ambassador with the aim of creating awareness.

We also met with a few collaborators such as Msambweni Beach House, to discuss ways of forming a turtle task force along the south coast of Kenya, which will help bring together different groups focusing on turtle conservation.

In addition, we took part in various meetings held in the area and will continue attending community meetings organised by local groups and BMU's. The purpose of these is to collect information on the fishermen's understanding of sea turtle foraging sites and in exchange create more awareness on sea turtle conservation in the area.

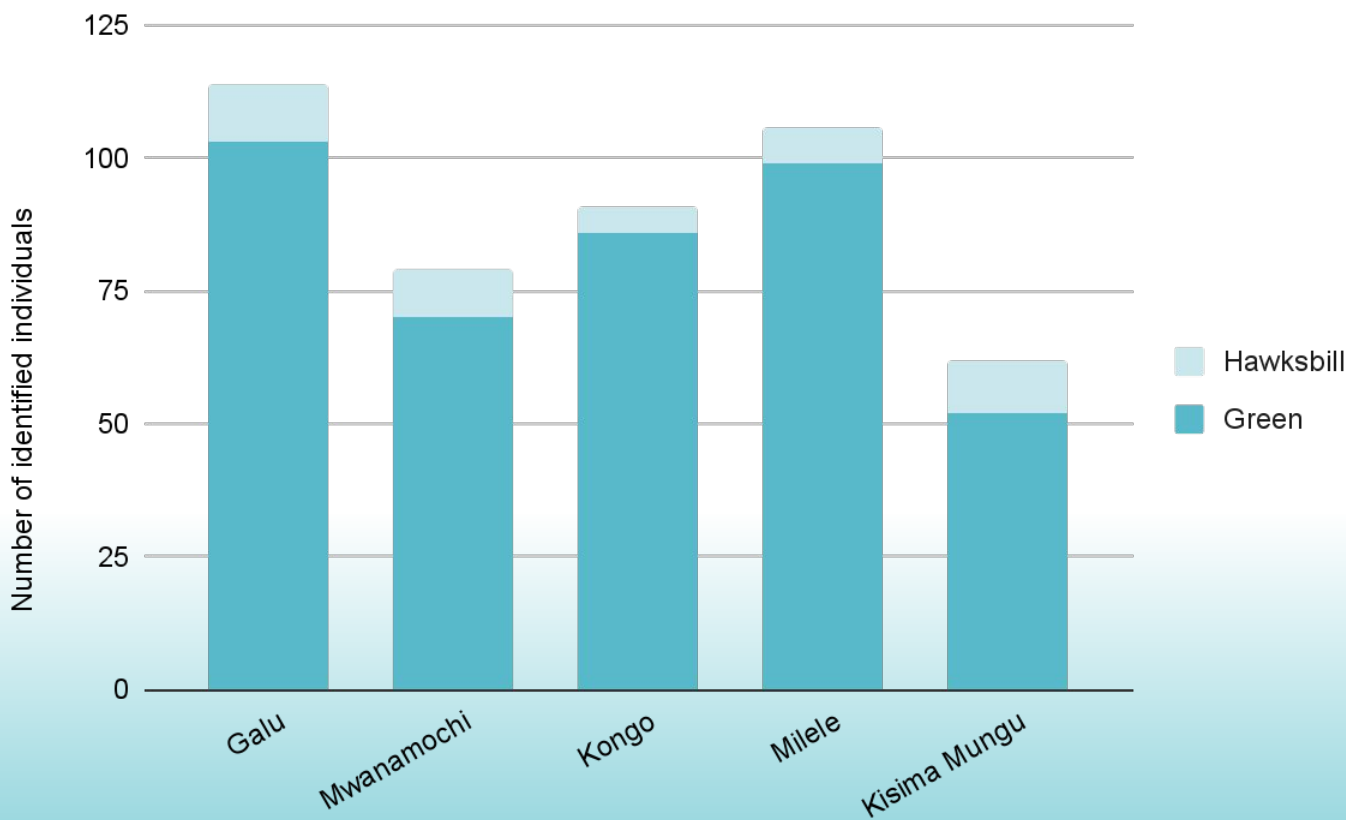
*-Leah Mainye, ORP Project Coordinator,  
Kenya*





(H211) was one of the most sighted turtle in Diani this quarter. Sighted 7 times.

## TURTLE SIGHTINGS & NEW INDIVIDUALS: KENYA





(Left) ORP’s Project Coordinator in Kenya, Leah, at the Kaskazi Resort for the Transboundary meeting with representatives from WIOMSA.KWS, WCS,KMFRI, SEACOLOGY and other local conservation groups and to discuss how Kenya and Tanzania can effectively manage their resources through management effort, protect biodiversity and promote joint management amongst them.

(Right) Leah in attendance with other turtle conservation groups on the South Coast, the Technical University of Mombasa and Pwani University students at a reporting workshop at the Kenya Wildlife Services office in Shimoni for a reporting on a“*marine litter Community-based Marine Litter Management for Restoration of Endangered turtle habitats along the Kenyan Coast*’ with the aim of solving turtle management issues in Kenya.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

	This Quarter	This Year
Hours Spent Surveying	55.4	123.65
Sites Surveyed	11	13





**OLIVE RIDLEY  
PROJECT**

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# Pakistan







## PAKISTAN

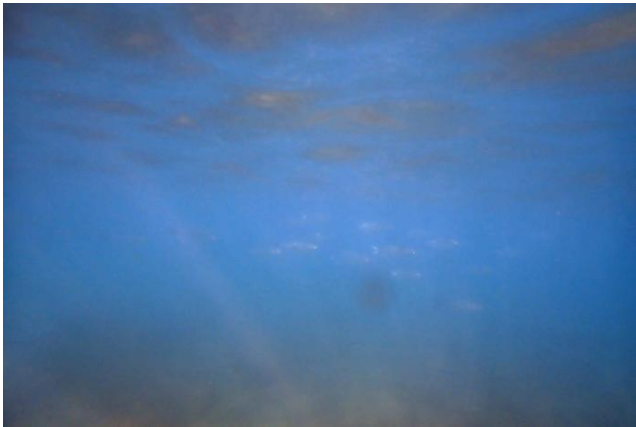
The scuba diving season is finally back in full swing in Pakistan. Due to poor visibility in October, it was too dangerous to remove ghost nets underwater and we only recovered 5gs. However, the visibility improved in November and December and our scuba diving operations and beach cleanups yielded 50 kg of recovered ghost gear.

Removing ghost gear from the ocean whilst diving can be very risky and require a high level of technical diving skills. We partner with local dive masters to recover ghost nets and only go out when it is safe to do so. Our Field Coordinator in Pakistan, Asif Baloch, has unparalleled knowledge of the local seas in the area around Abdul Rehman Goth. This knowledge, combined with his relations with local fishers and his navigation skills, enable us to track down a ghost nets that no one else have been able to find.

It seems that our ghost net bracelets were a popular stocking filler this year. We sold 28 ghost net bracelets and five ghost leashes during the quarter. Our ghost gear products are made by artisans in the fishing village of Abdul Rehman Goth from ghost gear our team recovers from the sea and the beaches in the area. They are sold in our [online shop](#). All profits from the sales of go back to the community.

We would like to thank our dive centre partner Indus Scuba for logistical support and for [certifying our team members](#).

*-Usman Iqbal, Project Manager,  
Pakistan*



(Left) This was the a typical day in “the office” for ORP’s Pakistan team in October. The visibility was so poor underwater you could barely see your hand in front of you. Removing ghost gear was too dangerous so we focused on beach cleanups whilst waiting for the visibility to improve..



(Right) This ghost net was recovered from the beach in Abdul Rehman Goth; it weighed 5 kg. Luckily it we did not find any entangled wildlife in the net.

	This Quarter	This Year	Since Project Began
Ghost Nets Recovered (kg)	50 kg	381 kg	5158 kg
Overall Growth Ghost Net Recovery	13%	7.3%	N/A
Ghost Leashes Made/Sold	0/5	97/69	545/479
Ghost Net Jewellery Made/Sold	0/28	100/73	565/438



(Left) In November and December, Dr Claire gave two university talks to veterinary students. The first was a zoom lecture to Glasgow Veterinary Student Zoological Society and attended by over 30 students. The second was held in person at her alumni university, Bristol Veterinary School to their Student Zoological Society.. Students often enquire about volunteering and undergoing their extra mural studies (compulsory work experience required throughout their time at veterinary school). These talks therefore provide a great opportunity to showcase the work of our veterinary team in the Maldives.

(Right) Dr Claire travelled to Guinea - Bissau in early December to provide a talk on sea turtle medicine and first aid to the first regional turtle workshop of West Africa. Seven countries attended this workshop: Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Mauritania, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Cape Verde, and Senegal.

This provided a unique insight into the conservation efforts of these countries and also highlighted the need to provide veterinary care to turtles when possible. The talk was well received and there is potential for future collaborations with members of the workshop.



(Left) At the end of November ORP Senior Scientist, Stephanie, visited the Maldives to engage with project partners old and new, including Patina in North Mal , JOALI BEING in Raa and Six Senses in Laamu Atoll, to provide staff training and make plans for the upcoming year.

On top of that, at her first stop, a bunch of very enthusiastic young guests learned about sea turtle biology. They joined Stephanie in drawing sea turtles on the beach and tried to see for themselves how hard it is to dig a turtle nest, even if you have hands!



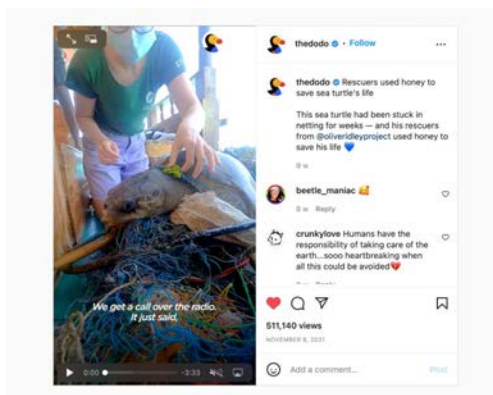


# VIRTUAL AWARENESS AND OUTREACH



(Left) Our Communications Officer, Rosie, attended a Q&A session with SeaToken on the popular gaming platform, Twitch. There were loads of great questions from the advertisement on Twitter and it was lovely for Rosie to catch up with one of our former sea turtle biologists, Kristina.

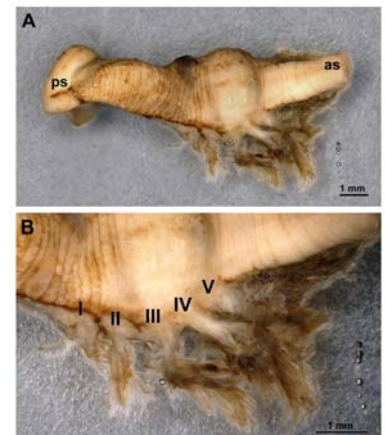
(Right) On November 30th, we participated in Giving Tuesday. Giving Tuesday is a day where everyone, everywhere can do something to support the good causes that mean a lot to them. This year we were asking for donations to help fund our exciting new satellite tagging project, [#ORPTrack](#). The project will help us to understand more about the journey of our rehabilitated and released sea turtle patients and their preferred habitats and help to inform conservation decisions in the future.



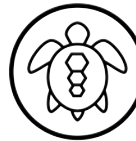
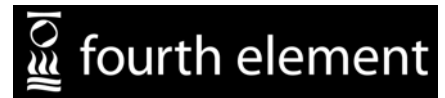
(Left) In November, one of our Visiting Vets, Dr Paul Ramos' compilation video our sea turtle patients Abba (who was rescued during his stay at the Rescue Centre) went viral on Instagram. The video, posted by The Dodo, has more than 510,000 views and 67,000 likes. This was a great opportunity to share our work and educate people from all around the world - thanks Paul!

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Köhnk S, Petros C, Lomas C, Riyad EM, Shameel I, Hawlitschek O and Stelfox M 2021. Stowaways: Marine Leeches infecting Olive Ridley Sea Turtles washed into Maldivian Waters entangled in Ghost Nets. *Comparative Parasitology* 88(2): 169-176.



# PARTNERS, COLLABORATORS & DONORS 2021



We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all our partners, supporters, fundraisers, donors, adoptive parents, and volunteers! We are only able to do this work thanks to your generosity and support.

Thank you!