

Nat Theo Club

FIELD NOTES

ISSUE #73



Loggerhead

SEA TURTLE

FEATURES

Loggerhead turtles are named for their large heads. They have a powerful jaw that is able to open sea snails and mollusk shells. In the Southeast, loggerheads can grow up to 400 pounds.

FUN FACT

During the egg laying months, volunteers walk the beaches every morning to find turtle tracks and disturbed sand. They will mark the turtle nests so that beach guests do not disturb the hidden nests.



HAVE YOU SEARCHED FOR WILDLIFE AT NIGHT?

Several years ago, my husband and I signed up for a beach tour in Vero Beach, Florida. The tour took place at night and was guided by a naturalist. We were on the lookout for turtles coming in from the ocean to lay their eggs in the sand. The naturalist taught us many things about observing sea turtles, including the importance of wearing dark clothing, being quiet, using red flashlights, and avoiding the use of flash on our cameras to prevent disturbing the turtles.

We drove from the nature center to a popular turtle-laying beach. We walked, looking out to sea, hoping to catch a glimpse of a turtle swimming offshore. Walkie-talkies helped the naturalist-guided groups communicate. After two hours of walking back and forth, I began praying that the Lord would provide a turtle, and soon after, He did.

I was so excited! We watched as the turtle moved slowly across the sand to the spot away from the water. She used all four fins to dig a body cavity and then an egg chamber. She laid about 100 eggs, covered them with sand, and then crawled back to the ocean.

The turtle eggs are incubated in the sand by the sun, and they will hatch after 7 to 8 weeks. The hatchlings climb out and crawl to the ocean to begin their lives as sea turtles.

Proverbs 16:9 says "In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps". For the mother turtle, her plan is to come ashore and lay eggs. The exact location may be dependent on the current, the weather, night fishing boats, or other obstacles. That is the same with us. God turns our God-honoring desires into action steps. Dream with God and trust that He is working out the details for our good.

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