

Students clean Odisha beach to facilitate mass nesting of turtles

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An Olive Ridley turtle digs in the sand to lay its eggs on a Odisha beach. (File photo)

BERHAMPUR (Odisha): Schoolchildren along with local volunteers have cleaned about 4km-long beach from Gokharakuda to Podampeta, near river Rushikulya mouth off Ganjam coast, the famous mass nesting site for the endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles.

Over 100 students of six high schools of the nearby villages together with the forest

personnel and wildlife activists picked up around three tonnes of debris from the beach in around three hours, to facilitate the mass nesting of the sea turtles, likely to take place in the last week of February.

Most of the students, who have taken part in the clean drive, organised by the Odisha Marine Resources Conservation Consortium (OMRCC), were the members of the eco-clubs of their respective schools, said Shankara Narayan Bej coordinator, district eco-club.

The drive was flagged off by the assistant conservator of forest, Berhampur Trinath Patnaik on Sunday.

Several school teachers, Michael Peter of World Wildlife Fund (WWF), activists of the Rushikulya sea turtle protection committee and local fishermen also took part in the drive. Different competitions in conservation of Olive Ridley turtle were also held among the students.

Cleaning of the beach before the mass nesting was one of the strategies adopted by the Forest department for safe and smooth nesting of the sea turtles, said Patnaik. Earlier, forest personnel had cleaned the beach, added forest range officer, Khallikote Dillip Kumar Martha.

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In a science project on "emerging problems in conservation of Olive Ridley sea turtle at Rushikulya mouth and its solution," the students of GK High School Subalaya, had pointed out the mass nesting might face hindrance due to pile up of garbage in the beach site.

After Gahiramatha in Kendrapara district, the Rushikulya River mouth in Ganjam district, has

emerged as the second largest rookery for the Olive Ridley turtles.

"Since the turtles climb into the beach at any time to lay eggs, we have also prepared other strategies with deployment of the forest staff and volunteers", said divisional forest officer, Berhampur AK Behera.

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Rajiv Kalkod | TNN | Feb 15, 2016, 08.02 PM IST

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Captured Bengaluru leopard slips out of tiger cage

HIGHLIGHTS

- The leopard entered school on February 7
- It injured several people before being tranquillized
- It was found to have glaucoma in an eye and a canine teeth missing
- The big cat wasn't radio-collared, nor CCTV cameras were in place in the zoon
- CM Siddaramaiah said he would seek information about

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BENGALURU: The leopard that was caught in an east Bengaluru school after it injured two people on February 7 escaped from its enclosure in the Bannerghatta Biological Park (BBP), 20 km from Bengaluru. Nearly 24 hours later, the big cat remained untraced after a day-long search in the vicinity of BBP.