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A young loggerhead sea turtle. *Caretta caretta*, photographed in the ocean near Panama City, Florida. Photo courtesy of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Public domain.

featured species

Loggerhead Sea Turtle, *Caretta caretta* (Linnaeus, 1758)

The World's Largest Hard-shelled Turtle

by M. A. Cohen

The most prevalent sea turtle in United States coastal waters, the loggerhead sea turtle, *Caretta caretta*, is an oceanic (marine) reptile that belongs to the Cheloniidae, the family of hard-shelled sea turtles. During the geological period known as the Cretaceous, approximately 145–66 million years ago, members of the Cheloniidae family developed, and, to this day, they remain largely unchanged.

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Head shot of a loggerhead turtle. **Photo © 2009 by Brian Gratwicke**

Having roamed the planet's oceans for the last 110 million years, loggerhead sea turtles are truly "ancient mariners." As an example, researchers using satellite-tracking have followed *C. caretta* routinely migrating thousands of miles across open oceans between their nesting beaches and their foraging grounds.

The genus and species names, *Caretta*, derive from the French word root *caret*, meaning a kind of turtle.

Although the Cheloniidae family comprises six separate genera, *C. caretta* is most closely related to the hawksbill turtle, *Eretmochelys imbricata*, and the Kemp's and olive ridley turtles, *Lepidochelys kempi* and *L. olivacea* (Bowen, 2003).

Description

The species' common name "loggerhead" refers to its extraordinarily large, muscular head and powerful jaws that are strong enough to crack the hard shells of its prey. In fact, according to the Turtle Hospital in Marathon, Florida, the loggerhead turtle has the strongest jaws of any species of sea turtle, measuring 900 psi, or 900 pounds (of force) per square inch, a bite strength similar to that of the Kodiak or Alaskan brown bear (*Ursus arctos middendorffi*).

Descriptions of the weight and carapace length of an adult loggerhead turtle vary from one authority to another. According to the Sea Turtle Conservancy, adult *C. caretta* typically weigh from 155 to 375 pounds (70 to 170 kilograms) with a carapace length of 2.5 to 3.5 feet (80 to 110 centimeters) [Information About Sea Turtles: Loggerhead Sea Turtle].

A massive individual, the largest loggerhead turtle ever documented, weighed 1,202 pounds (545 kilograms) and measured 7 feet (213 centimeters) in carapace length (Loggerhead Turtle/Olive Ridley Project).

While the hatchling's carapace is heart-shaped, yellowish brown to brown or grayish black with three prominent longitudinal keels, the adult's carapace is reddish-brown, moderately heart-shaped, and lacking keels. As the juvenile loggerhead turtle becomes a subadult, its adult coloration develops.

The plastron coloration of both juvenile and adult loggerheads is usually cream to yellow. The hatchling loggerhead's head, limbs, and tail are usually light to dark brown or gray. The adult loggerhead's head varies from reddish- to yellowish-brown to

Loggerhead turtle hatchling. Photo by Steve Hillebrand, USFWS, Public domain.

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The teal color on this world map depicts the approximate range of the loggerhead turtle. Image courtesy of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Public domain.

olive, and its scales often have yellow borders. The limbs and tail of the adult may be reddish-brown to brown.

Range and Habitat

The loggerhead turtle ranges throughout the tropical, subtropical, and temperate regions in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, as well as traveling in the Caribbean and Mediterranean Seas. *C. caretta* inhabits both the deep open ocean and the comparatively shallow waters adjacent to continental and island coasts.

The loggerhead turtle sometimes enters fresh- and brackish-water areas including bays, creeks, lagoons, salt marshes, and the mouths of large rivers (Caretta caretta).

Ordinarily, once they hatch, male loggerhead turtles rarely if ever leave the water. Conversely, females come ashore every two to three years to dig their nests and lay clutches of eggs, usually on or near their natal beaches, that is, the beaches on which they themselves hatched.

Foods and Feeding

With its primarily carnivorous diet, the loggerhead turtle consumes a wide variety of animal species, including invertebrates such as cuttlefish, conchs, jellyfish, polychaete or bristle worms, bivalves such as clams, mussels, oysters, and scallops, snails, sponges, squid, barnacles, shrimp, crabs, insects, horseshoe crabs, sea urchins, fish (eggs, juveniles, and adults), and whelks, among others animal species. Occasionally loggerhead turtles will consume plant species, including various algae and seagrasses (Caretta caretta).

C. caretta generally detects suitable prey using its senses of sight and smell. Coral reefs, old shipwrecks, and rocky outcroppings are the preferred sources for its prey (Caretta caretta).

Reproduction

Characterized as long-lived, loggerhead turtles may live for 70 to 80 years according to the estimates of researchers.

Females reach reproductive maturity at or before 35 years of age, coming ashore at intervals of two to four years to nest. In the northern hemisphere, loggerhead turtles mate at the ocean's surface from March to June, and females usually lay their eggs from April to September, laying three to five clutches per season some two weeks apart. Each clutch comprises about 100 eggs, with clutch size ranging from as few as 23 to as many as 198 eggs (Caretta caretta).

As with many species of turtles, temperature-dependent sex determination (the incubation temperature in the nest) governs the sexes of loggerhead hatchlings. Incubation temperatures of 89.6°F (32°C) or higher produce female hatchings, while temperatures of 82.4°F (28°C) or below produce male hatchlings. Moreover, intermediate incubation temperatures produce a combination of both female and male hatchlings (Caretta caretta).

Although they are rare worldwide, interspecific hybrids between loggerhead turtles and other marine turtle species occur. Researchers confirm through DNA analysis the existence of the products of these matings, specifically crosses of loggerheads (*C. caretta*) with hawksbills (*E. imbricata*), loggerheads (*C. caretta*) with Kemp's ridleys (*L. kempi*), and loggerheads (*C. caretta*) with green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*). Several of these species share nesting beaches in various locations throughout their

Caretta caretta, the loggerhead turtle. **Photo © 2015 by Wexor Tmg**

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respective ranges, so the presence of both males and females of these species offshore is predictable. As a result of this proximity, opportunities for hybridizing events to occur are entirely possible (Karl, et al., 2012).

Threats

Many dangers threaten *C. caretta* populations. Researchers believe the risks posed by deep sea commercial fishing equipment are the greatest threats to the survival of loggerhead turtles.

Being air-breathing animals, marine turtles often fall into the category of "bycatch," losing their lives to fishing gear such as longline and gillnet fisheries as well as bottom trawlers from which they cannot escape to surface for a breath of air. Enforcement of turtle-excluder device regulations on fishing nets saves many sea turtle lives, and more compliance will save even more marine turtles.

Fishing gear is only one of many dire threats to loggerhead turtles. Loss and degradation of both foraging and nesting grounds directly impacts loggerheads and other sea turtles. Development of beach-side areas for both residential and commercial purposes is a leading cause of nesting beach loss.

Artificial lighting poses another threat to both nesting females and hatchlings. According to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, "on a natural beach, the brightest direction is most often the open view of the night sky over, and reflected by, the ocean." Artificial lighting from beach-side homes and hotels causes the disorientation of hatchlings by as they attempt to make their way to the sea following hatching. Thousands of hatchlings die annually in Florida due to artificial lighting (Artificial Lighting and Sea Turtle Hatchling Behavior).

Caretta caretta, the loggerhead turtle. **Photo © 2003 by Damien du Toit**

Marine pollution, particularly by long-lasting pollutants like plastics, is a significant and growing problem globally. As plastic objects crack and break apart, they eventually become microplastics (miniscule pieces) that are frequently mistaken for food items by marine life. Because microplastics are indigestible, consuming them can cause blockages within the turtle's digestive system that often lead to death.

Conservation Efforts

Facing many serious threats, loggerhead turtle populations globally are decreasing. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature designates *C. caretta* as vulnerable on its IUCN Red List of Threatened Species as of 2017. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species lists the species as CITES I, thus prohibiting any type of commercial trade.

Locally many nations afford the loggerhead turtle some measure of legal protection from exploitation. For example, the United States lists its subpopulations as "endangered" under the Endangered Species Act and protects important nesting beaches as much as possible.

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A CRITICALLY ENDANGERED TORTOISE ENJOYS ZOO MED GRASSLAND TORTOISE FOOD

The Radiated Tortoise *(Astrochelys radiata)* is the 6th rarest tortoise in the world, and the heroes at Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA) are fighting for its future. As a non-profit, the TSA relies on support from the community. Zoo Med has pledged to donate pallets of their Natural Grassland Tortoise Food to TSA's Madagascar location 3 times a year. This food prevents shell and spinal growth deformities by matching the nutrient profile and high fiber content of a wild tortoise diet.

Join Zoo Med in supporting the TSA's conservation efforts; visit their website to learn more and how to contribute: turtlesurvival.org

TSA
turtle survival alliance

"Someone Told Me It's All Happening at the Zoo"

Story by Karen Berry
Photos by Cristina Perovich and Karen Berry

Introductory briefing giving an overview of Moorpark College's Zoo program, the only one with its own teaching zoo on campus.

The entire world has been in some state of lockdown for a year and a half. During that time, there were no in-person meetings for most of the CTTC Chapters. Some, like Valley, held Zoom meetings, but that's no substitute for being in person, able to shake hands, give hugs, and fully interact with our fellow members.

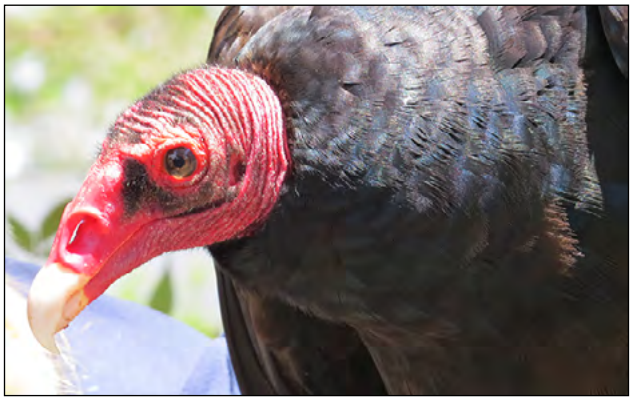
Valley Chapter was fortunate to emerge from forced brumation with a field trip on June 18th. Our President, Bob Hazard, had visited America's Teaching Zoo at Moorpark College in Moorpark (Ventura County), and thought it would make a really nice field trip. It was a warm day, but being able to meet with our club friends, share "what's been happening" over the last year plus, and see some great animals, made for a pleasant experience.

Valley Chapter members were joined by several members from the Santa Clarita and Kern County Chapters. Masks are still required on campus, so we all donned ours, completed a short questionnaire and had our temperatures taken at the reception area.

First stop was the entrance to the zoo, where the group was briefed on the College's Teaching Zoo program, and was given an overview of the animals currently at the facility. We were then divided into three smaller groups with our guides.

Moorpark's Exotic Animal Training and Management program (EATM) was started in 1974 by Bill Brisby, a professor at the College, with a single animal, "Kiska" the wolf. Over the years the program has grown, and numerous animals of different species have helped the students earn their Associate in Science degrees, learning what they need to obtain jobs in many areas of the animal industry. They are working as trainers at animal theme parks, as caretakers and management at zoos, as trainers of animals for TV or movies, as conservationists, and the list goes on.

What makes the Moorpark program unique is that the students have a Zoo on the campus where they work and learn their craft, instead of having to travel to the local zoo in their college's city, as with many other programs. The animals have come to the Zoo through donations as well as breeding programs.



Close-up of a turkey buzzard.

Moorpark Zoo's sulcata tortoise.

Zoos today are on the forefront for breeding many endangered species, not only for public education, but to help with increasing the number of animals that can be utilized for captive breeding programs in their countries of origin. As an example, Diego, the Galápagos tortoise who had come to the

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San Diego Zoo in the 1940's, was discovered through DNA testing to be a Hood Island tortoise. He was repatriated to the Galápagos Islands in 1977, where he joined two other males in the captive breeding program to help save the seriously depleted Hood Island population from extinction.

Incidentally, last year (2020), the Hood Island tortoise captive breeding program on the Galápagos Island of Santa Cruz was closed down, having established a sufficient number of Hood Island tortoises on the Galápagos island of Española to ensure the species' survival. The remaining breeding program tortoises were returned to the wild on Española in June 2020, having helped save their species. Diego is now around 100 years old, and has earned a nice retirement on the island with the others, having done his part and sired around 900 offspring. He is expected to live many more years.

One very interesting thing about the Moorpark Zoo is that the animals get to out on "walks". The exotic birds are connected to falconer's gloves on their handlers' hands, and

The American alligator enjoying basking while showing the visitors his teeth.

are carried throughout the grounds to get out for a change of scenery. The mammals and others, even Clarence the Galápagos, get to exercise in some of the zoo's open areas. There are animal shows and demonstrations for the Zoo visitors. We saw a number of large birds being carried on their "walks" while we were visiting the Zoo.

Our group's first stop on the tour was the reptile area, where we were greeted by the leopard and sulcata tortoises, no strangers to our members. The leopard tortoise kept walking as we came by, while the sulcata sat and watched everyone as we moved to our next stop. The reptile house, which will be undergoing some renovation to expand and improve the habitats, contains lizards, snakes, and other small reptiles.

The last stop in the reptile area featured the enclosures for an American alligator and Clarence the Galápagos tortoise. The alligator, who wasn't cared for properly when he was younger and whose growth was stunted, showed us his large teeth. He is now getting proper care and diet, and is a big enough alligator to be a force no one would care to encounter in an open area.

We were able to go into Clarence's enclosure with him and have our pictures taken with him. He loves to have his neck stroked, and will rise up to look at his visitors. The guide gave him the love, and he raised his head up and looked at us. He is 98 years old, and has that "wise old man" appearance when he looks at you. Needless to say, this old tortoise is a favorite with Zoo visitors, including many of us.

The female Bengal tiger having an afternoon nap in the heat of the day.

Clarence the giant tortoise and the author share a moment.

Clarence close-up.

There are a lot of species of birds in the aviary area, our next stop on the tour. Many parrots, macaws, and other species from all

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A group of field-trip visitors with their student guide.

over the world, display colors rivaling a 64-color box of Crayola crayons. A raven that had been injured lives at the Zoo. So do a couple of turkey buzzards, also known as turkey vultures, one of which was hit by a car, and, while he still has his wings, he's unable to fly. The bald eagle sat regally on his perch in plain sight, but the great horned owl was so well hidden behind a tree that it was impossible to get a picture of him. Many of these large predator birds are native to southern California and can be seen in our neighborhoods.

As the day got warmer, most of the mammals retreated to sleeping areas and weren't visible when we moved to their part of the zoo. The Bengal tiger was resting comfortably next to the enclosure fencing, so we were able to see her pretty well, although she paid no attention to us and appeared to be fast asleep. The lioness was also more interested in a nap than being sociable, and was lying along a side wall facing away from us. What we could see, however, was an extremely large set of paws, attached to a very large body. NOT your average house cat, that's for sure

The most entertaining residents at any zoo are the primates, and that was the same for us. Although it was getting warmer, a lot of them were still pretty playful, but even some of them were starting to move back toward sleeping areas for a possible siesta. One monkey has no left hand, but didn't let that keep him from having some fun. He used his right arm to take a few swings back and forth, and then sat and rested for a few moments while we walked by.

"Mooned" by a baboon.

The smaller monkeys really seem to like the toys that the students make for them. The toys are various shapes, made of different materials, and serve as enrichment for the monkeys as well as items of amusement. Some of the toys are heavy fabric-covered hoses woven into shapes to swing or play with.

Not all of the primates seemed happy to see visitors, though. As we were passing the baboon enclosure, one that had been watching the parade of distant bipedal relatives, decided he had seen enough of us and "mooned" the photographer.

After completing our tour, we were making our way back to the staging area when one of the students was taking a turkey buzzard for a walk. This was an opportunity to see one up close. They are in my neighborhood, but are usually only seen flying overhead, or, if they can beat the ravens to it, feasting upon unfortunate roadkill.

The animals weren't the only ones under observation. This monkey found the humans interesting.

The Moorpark Teaching Zoo is not huge, as are most municipal zoos, but the animals are varied, interesting, fun to watch in a more intimate setting, and our student guides are enthusiastic about their choice

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Clarence the Galápagos tortoise engaging with visitors.

of major. The EATM program is a unique opportunity for students interested in careers in various animal occupations, with the primary learning center right on campus.

We'd like to thank Moorpark College for our "behind the scenes" tour of the Zoo and an interesting learning experience. Despite the masks, it was great to spend time with fellow members in our first in-person group activity in almost a year and a half.

The Zoo is now reopening to the public and is a nice family outing. For more information on hours, tickets, etc., please visit **https://zoo.moorparkcollege.edu/visitor-information/**

One of the turkey buzzards out for its "walk." The student wears a falconer's glove to which the buzzard is tethered. The bird isn't afraid of people, but rather interested in them. Fortunately we're too big to be considered part of his dinner.

Classified Advertisements

Classified advertisements run for one issue at 5^{00} for up to four lines. Ads are accepted at the discretion of the Editor. Classified ads are available to members and subscribers only and are run as a service to our members. California Turtle & Tortoise Club is not responsible for merchandise placed for sale in the *Tortuga Gazette*.

Please make your check payable to the California Turtle & Tortoise Club.

Please send ad fee to: CTTC *Tortuga Gazette*, attn Treasurer, P. O. Box 7300, Van Nuys, CA 91409–7300.

Mail fee with ad copy to the *Tortuga Gazette* mailing address; OR, mail fee to the postal address above, and email the ad copy to the **Gazette Editor**.

FOR SALE: Radiated tortoise hatched November 2020. $1100^{.00}$, CA residents only. Burmese Star Tortoises hatched January 2021. $750^{.00}$. Send email to **degatti@sbcglobal.net**

"Loggerhead turtle after jellyfish."
Illustration **copyright © 2010 by vastateparkstaff**

Practical Tips for Finding a Lost Tortoise

by Abigail DeSesa

Upon discovering your tortoise is missing, panic is often the first reaction. We love our pets and immediately worry about their wellbeing. Now is the time to keep calm and follow a few steps that may help get your tortoise found and back home.

▶ First, get all the people who live in your house together and check every square inch of the property to make sure the tortoise isn't simply hiding in a new spot, something they often do, and somewhere you wouldn't expect. Inspect all fence lines and gates for any holes that could tell you the direction the tortoise left, if it did escape.

▶ If your yard search has negative results, notify your closest neighbors. Include those on both sides of your home, across the street, and behind you, even if it is up or downhill. Ask that they share this with their children, if they have children. Children often know things happening in the neighborhood that adults do not.

▶ Next, get online and check the local animal shelters to see if your tortoise has been turned in. Check your local Facebook pet groups, NextDoor.com, and Craigslist. If nothing is posted, create a post that you have lost your tortoise, and include the type of tortoise (desert, Sulcata, Russian, etc.), the city/town, and the general neighborhood.

Please add a single photo of the lost tortoise. Do not post too many photos. Unfortunately, if the tortoise shows up at an animal shelter or is found by a private party before you find out, someone with a few accurate photos could claim it. Sadly, this has happened. Make sure **you** have enough photos to identify your tortoise.

▶ Next step: make up brightly colored signs, preferably neon, stating "Lost Tortoise" and add your phone number. Keep it very short, use large print so it can be seen easily and read quickly. You can add the word "reward" if you are offering one. This has a chance of boosting people's interest. Do **not** offer a specific amount or offer it solely for information — only for return of the tortoise. Sadly, there is scam potential with rewards.

Place the first sign in your own yard. Move out from your home to each corner and intersection, posting signs. Post one on all local bulletin boards, including at the nearest animal shelter, grocery stores, pet stores, veterinarians, feed and tack stores, etc. If you have a community group of mailboxes, that is a great place too.

▶ Contact your local turtle & tortoise rescue/groups/clubs/societies. Advise the group of your missing tortoise, what kind it is, the city/town and the nearest cross streets. Finders often try to turn a tortoise they found in to specific groups/rescues. A simple internet search will get the contact information for these organizations. Most groups only have contact information via email or social media, rather than through phone numbers.

▶ First thing in the morning, when the sun starts warming the air, do another thorough yard search for your tortoise. The majority of tortoises come out at this time of day. Put out a favorite food item so you can see if that draws the tortoise out of hiding or if it went missing when you were not watching. If it's not in the yard, walk around your neighborhood to see if the tortoise happens to be out there.

Continue checking the animal shelters. If the tortoise is not found before the season changes, remember to do this same kind of check on warm winter days and when spring arrives. This is when many tortoises will start to wake up and appear after a long rest.

▶ Keep in mind, people who pick up animals often move them elsewhere when they have found them or stolen them. Make sure to look outside your immediate area, checking and posting with social media and other resources in adjacent neighborhoods and communities.

▶ To help prevent theft, make sure your tortoise cannot be seen from outside of your property. Keep close watch when workers are on the property or bring your tortoise inside if possible. To help prevent escapes, regularly check all fence lines, gates, and latches/locks.

Knowing what to do if your tortoise does wander off can increase the chances of successfully getting it back home.

Mike's Turtle Net Picks by Michael J. Connor, Ph.D.

A varied selection of recent articles, stories and sites on the Web that some of you may find as interesting as I did. This list is also posted at tortoise.org/turtlenetpicks/turtlenetpicks.html

Energy Plants Threaten Nevada's Desert Tortoises
Energy sprawl continues to impact desert tortoises. Within weeks of translocation, 30 of 139 tortoises moved to make way for the Yellow Pine Solar Project, were dead.

Softshell Sex Chromosome Dosage Compensation Study
Scientists find that sex chromosome gene expression is still influenced by temperature in spiny soft-shelled turtles that have chromosomal rather than temperature-dependent sex determination.

Laterality in Resting Aldabra Tortoises
New behavioral study shows Aldabra tortoises tend to nap with their head resting to the right.

Galápagos Tortoises as Ecosystem Engineers
Are giant tortoises the elephants or hippos of the Galápagos ecosystem?

Chinese Elongated Tortoise
Rare video footage of one of China's rare elongated tortoises rescued by police in Yunnan.

Cretaceous Turtle Embryo
CT scan reveals embryo in fossilized, near tennis-ball sized *Yuchelys nanyangensis* egg laid over 66 million years ago.

Washington State Western Pond Turtle Release
The 30 year program to release young Western pond turtles to bolster populations continues.

CDFW Recommends Endangered Listing for Leatherback Sea Turtles
The California Department of Fish and Wildlife recommends that the Pacific leatherback sea turtle be added to the state endangered species list. The final decision is expected mid-October.

Green Sea Turtles Vital to Seagrass Dispersal
New study reveals that green sea turtles play a key role in maintaining carbon-sequestering seagrass meadows, by consuming and pooping seagrass seeds.

Average Size of Florida's Nesting Sea Turtles is Decreasing
A new University of Central Florida study indicates that smaller loggerhead and green sea turtles are nesting on Florida beaches than in the past, perhaps reflecting new recruits as a result of successful sea turtle conservation efforts.

Using Drones to Probe Green Sea Turtle Population Dynamics
Biologists compare drone and boat surveys during green sea turtle breeding season on Herron Island, Australia.

Budget Cuts Threaten Padre Island Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle Program
The sea turtle program at Padre Island National Seashore has been a conservation success, but a recent review recommends scaling it back.

New ISTS Website
The International Sea Turtle Society that holds the annual Sea Turtle Symposium has a new website.

Why Turtles Live So Long
Turtle longevity may be related to their ability to protect themselves from long-term cellular damage by quickly killing off any damaged cells.

A preprint of the new study is available.

Latest issue of the Indian Ocean Turtle Newsletter is now available.

CTTC Turtle And Tortoise Listserve
To talk with other turtle and tortoise fans in a friendly atmosphere join CTTC's Turtle and Tortoise list or send an email to: <**CTTC-TurtleAndTortoise-list+subscribe@groups.io**>.

CTTC On Facebook
For breaking news updates follow CTTC on Facebook!

"We are the first generation to feel the sting of climate change, and we are the last generation that can do something about it."

— Jay Inslee (b. 1951) Governor of the State of Washington

In Memoriam
Robin Robb

Photo by Mardy Graves.

The chelonian world has lost a devoted patron. It is with heavy and tearful hearts that we share the loss of Robin Robb. Robin had won several battles with cancer during her life, but her fighting spirit and determination were not enough to be victorious this time, and she left us peacefully the night of July 11, 2021.

Robin leaves behind a loving husband of more than 40 years and a daughter whose career path followed in her mother's footsteps. Robin spent her entire adult life serving and caring for others as a registered nurse. It is no surprise that her caring spirit overflowed to the animal kingdom.

Robin's passion and devotion to the chelonian world manifested itself through her Life membership in CTTC, membership with the Turtle Conservancy, membership with the Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee (to name just a few) and her own group of turtle and tortoise pets. She also took in a number of stray or homeless cats over the years, too.

In addition to chairing the CTTC's 50th Anniversary celebration, she was active in multiple chapters and at various times held officer positions in them, as well as serving on the Executive Board and its committees. Robin was always one of the first to sign up for attending any Chapter's annual show, bringing animals to present and help share knowledge with the public.

Left to right: Dave, Jennifer, Abigail, Robin and Lynda. Photo by Santa Clarita Valley Chapter 2015.

No matter her duties, it was always with "it's for the turtles" in mind. Robin made considerable contributions to the CTTC through the abundant generosity of her time, gifts, and donations.

The following are thoughts and feelings about Robin shared by several CTTC colleagues for this memorial tribute.

"When I think of Robin, these words immediately come to mind: kind, generous, caring, thoughtful, considerate, welcoming, organized, detailed, dedicated, loyal. From the very first moment I met Robin, I knew she was a "one of a kind" person. She brought everything to life. Our CTTC Foothill Chapter meetings were informative, exciting, full of energy and so much fun! Rest in peace, Robin."
— Cindy Uehara, Foothill Chapter

"Robin was such a sweet kind person and I am so glad that my family and I got to spend time with her."
— Jeannine Jones, Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

"I have a fond memory when Robin was running to be on the executive board and her smile and wonderful attitude won me over. It is for the Tortugas and the women who loved them. You will be missed."
— Heather Ponek, Kern County Chapter

"Winston Churchill said, 'We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.' What an incredible life Robin made! Robin's generosity never stopped surprising me - inspiring and endless! I am a better person for having known

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her. Rest in peace, lovely lady, until we meet again."
— Abigail DeSesa, Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

"Robin was like a breath of fresh air to our club! Her gener osity, kindness and enthusiasm for doing special things for members of the club will be missed by everyone! She and I worked closely together on decorating and on fundraising projects. I just can't imagine having meetings without her! I loved her dearly, and she will be greatly missed!"
— Mardy Graves, Foothill Chapter

Jeanette Lea & Robin. Photo by Mardy Graves.

Photo from the Halloween Party in 2019 provided by Foothill Chapter.

"Everybody we meet leaves imprints somewhere on us. It's the ones left on our hearts that we remember fondly and forever."
— Karen Berry, Valley Chapter

"Robin Robb, our dear friend and President, expressed her love and caring for us members through her remarkable generosity of time and money. Robin instilled life and hope in our Foothill Chapter. She is our glowing bright star who still shines."
— Jeanette Lea, Foothill Chapter

Tribute text written by Abigail DeSesa. Photographer and source credits accompany photos.

California Agency Recommends Listing Leatherback Sea Turtles as Endangered

Prehistoric Reptiles Threatened by Fishing — Turtle Island Restoration Network press release

Sacramento, CA—16 August 2021—The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) released its recommendation today to protect leatherback sea turtles as endangered under the state's Endangered Species Act. The status review precedes an October 2021 vote, by the CDFW, on whether to list the leatherback sturtles.

The action came in response to a petition from the Center for Biological Diversity(CBD) and Turtle Island Restoration Network (TIRN).

"California's action today is a decisive step in the recovery of critically endangered leatherback turtles, one of California's most giant, gentle and unique marine species," said Todd Steiner, a wildlife ecologist and executive director of TIRN. "Combined with earlier action to declare the leatherback the official marine reptile of California, we now must redouble our efforts to eliminate all threats from commercial fishing, pollution and climate change."

Scientists estimate that leatherback sea turtles have declined in abundance off California by 5.6% annually over nearly 30 years. An estimated 50 Pacific leatherbacks now forage in California waters annually, as compared to 178 Pacific leatherbacks during the years 1990–2003.

"The state's report makes clear that entanglement in fishing gear is the biggest threat to leatherback sea turtles," said Catherine Kilduff, an attorney at the CBD. "These enormous, charismatic sea turtles are threatened in California's waters and internationally. For millions of years, leatherbacks have traveled across the Pacific using their long flippers, which can easily catch on fishing lines. Now California has to commit to ensuring they survive by converting to ropeless pots and traps and doing research to prevent entanglement in other gear."

Protecting leatherbacks under the CA Endangered Species Act would make them a state conservation priority. Despite the lack of regular monitoring of state fisheries, leatherback sea turtles have been found tangled in commercial rock crab (2019) and Dungeness crab gear (2015, 2016).

In June 2020 the CDFW determined that increased protections may be warranted and began the status review.

A review of leatherback sea turtle science last year concluded that West Pacific leatherbacks, one of seven distinct populations of leatherback sea turtles worldwide, face a high extinction risk.

Meeting Schedule

Click on your Chapter's website link for the latest program information. Programs may be scheduled after newsletter publication.

Chino Valley
17 September with Luma Fowler; 15 October with Dr. Audra De La Torre. In-person meetings at the Chino Girl Scout House.

Foothill
Contact chapter for meeting information.

High Desert
13 September; 11 October: In-person meetings at Hillcrest Medical Building in Victorville until further notice.

Inland Empire
3 September; 1 October via Zoom.

Kern County
13 September; 11 October via Zoom.

Low Desert
Paused in-person meetings until it is safe to gather.

Orange County
10 September; 8 October. Joint meetings with Care Society via Zoom.

Ridgecrest
13 September; 11 October. In-person outdoor meetings at the Maturango Museum.

Santa Barbara-Ventura
Contact the chapter for meeting information.

Santa Clarita
Meeting information to be announced.

TOOSLO (San Luis Obispo)
Paused activities due to pandemic restrictions.

TTCS (Long Beach)
10 September; 8 October. Joint meetings with Orange County via Zoom.

Valley
17 September; 15 October via Zoom.

California Turtle & Tortoise Club: a Society Dedicated to Turtle & Tortoise Preservation, Conservation and Education since 1964, Promoting and Facilitating the Care, Rehoming, and Adoption of Native and Nonnative Turtles and Tortoises.

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Loggerhead turtle photographed near Grand Cayman Island, south of Cuba in the northwestern Caribbean Sea. **Photo © 2010 by John St. John**

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Membership in the CTTC and subscriptions to the Tortuga Gazette are handled through the CTTC Chapters. The Chapters also manage membership renewals (see postal addresses to the right).

Many members choose to join a nearby Chapter to participate in Chapter meetings and other activities. Print membership forms from the **CTTC website**.

Your Chapter and your renewal date (month/year) are displayed on your newsletter notification. Mail your new or renewal membership/subscription to the Chapter of your choice.

Membership fees

- **Student membership $15.00**
- **Individual membership $25.00**
- **Family membership $35.00**
- **Life membership $500.00**

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