

ANNUAL REPORT 2016



**Lang Tengah
Turtle Watch**

Tanjong Jara Resort



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SUMMARY

- Over the 2016 season, the project was rated 4.75/5 for guest satisfaction.
- We released 4,920 endangered green turtle hatchlings and 16 critically endangered painted terrapins.
- 100% of returning Tanjong Jara Resort guests surveyed said that their stay has been enhanced by the presence of the turtle hatchery.
- Our Nest Adoption Programme was so popular with hotel guests that we had to build a second hatchery. Guests adopted a total of 3,216 eggs over our two opening months.
- 100% of surveyed guests will recommend for their friends to come and visit Lang Tengah Turtle Watch at Tanjong Jara Resort.
- We removed 592 kg of rubbish from the beach in front of Tanjong Jara Resort, with the help of 168 volunteers from the local community.
- 65% of guests surveyed said they would return to Tanjong Jara Resort just so that they can visit the turtle hatchery again.



Green turtle hatching from its egg.

OUR TEAM



Anneliese Appleton
Project Coordinator

Anneliese studied Environmental Geography and International Development until 2014 and interned on Lang Tengah during 2015. After working at the Houses of Parliament over the monsoon, she returned to manage Lang Tengah Turtle Watch at Tanjong Jara Resort.



Leander Kruger
Research Assistant Intern

Born and raised in Zimbabwe to German parents, he studied BSc. Environmental Science and MSc. Landscape Ecology in Germany.



Natasha Zulaikha
Research Assistant Intern

From Kuala Lumpur, Natasha is currently in process of acquiring her BSc in Environmental Sciences from Nottingham University.



Lee Shyen Yee
Research Assistant Intern

Born in Penang, Malaysia and studied Bachelor of Applied Science in Biodiversity Conservation and Management from Universiti Malaysia Terengganu.



Emma Barnett
Research Assistant Intern

From Brighton, England and a recent graduate of the University of Sheffield having completed an MBiolSci in Zoology.



Rifqah Ahmad Rostam
Education and Events Intern

Rifqah has a degree in Marine Science from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. She interned with Lang Tengah Turtle Watch on their island project in 2014, and returned in 2016 to run the beach clean-up event at Tanjong Jara.

INSTALLATION

We started by constructing our hatchery on the beach nearby the Nelayan Restaurant, so that we could start housing turtle nests being laid on our licensed beaches, stretching 8 km along the coastline running past Tanjong Jara Resort.

The hatchery was constructed using a simple wooden trellis and a traditional roof of attap nipah, in order to blend in sympathetically with the natural, simple, yet elegant aesthetic of the resort.



Constructing the hatchery.



Hatchery semi-completed.



Hatchery completed.



Building the Visitors' Hut, using traditional nibong palm wood.

The hatchery was constructed using a simple wooden trellis and a traditional roof of attap nipah, in order to blend in sympathetically with the natural, simple, yet elegant aesthetic of the resort.

This acts as a base for our staff and interns during the day, as well as providing an informative space for guests to come and find out more about the project, sea turtles and conservation at large by talking with our team and looking through our extensive bank of resource materials.



Visitors' Hut completed.

RANGERS

In order to patrol the beach for nesting turtles, we employed a dedicated team of local rangers, who are also staff at the resort. They also help us with hatching releases.



Our dedicated team of rangers.

NEST INSPECTIONS

We regularly check our turtle nests to keep an eye on their development, intervening if there is any sign of predation by fungus or crabs.

Every week we pass the daily schedule of our nest checks to the staff at the reception, Teratai Bar and Nelayan Restaurant. This means guests are informed of when they can come over to the hatchery and observe these inspections. This offers guests an interactive and informative experience, as well as a rare opportunity to see turtle eggs and – if lucky – hatchlings.



Inspecting a nest for signs of fungal infection.



Tanjong Jara Guests gathered at the hatchery for a nest inspection.



Throughout these nest inspections our team deliver informative talks to the guests, explaining details about the incubation process, the life-cycle of the turtles, as well as a myriad of other biological, ecological and behavioural details about these majestic creatures and their surrounding environment.

LTTW team showing Tanjong Jara guests a newly hatched turtle.

HATCHLING RELEASES



Hatchlings snoozing on the surface of the sand, waiting for nightfall.

Conducting the nest inspections also allows us to ascertain the developmental phase of the hatchlings, and therefore when they will be ready to make their way out to sea. Once we know that hatchlings are ready to be released that evening, we will contact the staff at reception, Teratai Bar and the Nelayan Restaurant, so they can notify guests of the release. This is usually undertaken at 9.30 p.m.

When guests arrive at our Visitors' Hut there are given a talk on what is about to happen, and a briefing on the 'dos and don'ts', to ensure the release happens smoothly and minimises any risk of unnecessary stress to the hatchlings.



Tanjong Jara guests being given a briefing before a hatchling release.



The 'runway' lined with guests ready to release the hatchlings under red light.

The hatchlings and guests are then taken down the beach, away from the bright lights of the hotel — which can disorientate the turtles — to a spot where a 'runway' is made. Hotel guests line the runway, funnelling the hatchlings to the sea and cheering them on.



4,920

**Endangered
Green Turtle
Hatchlings**



16

**Critically
Endangered
Painted Terrapins
Hatchlings**

NEST ADOPTIONS

With hotel guests showing great enthusiasm towards the upcoming official launch of the turtle project on 2 July, we started getting many enquiries about how they could sponsor the nests. We started a waiting list and between the official project launch on 2 July and the 30 August we had received 34 nest adoptions, which equated to 3,216 eggs, becoming 2,785 hatchlings.

When resort guests pledge to adopt a nest, we contact tender holders along the Terengganu coastline who normally send their eggs to the market as food. When they get a turtle laying, they deliver the eggs to us and we pay them the market price. Then we incubate the eggs in our hatchery.



Our Visitors' Hut ready for the official launch of Lang Tengah Turtle Watch at Tanjong Jara Resort.



The 'Kee Family' nest



Nest adoption update, with the egg in the foreground thinning and close to hatching.

Once adopted, the nest is then marked with a handmade stake, bearing the name of the adopter's choice. Regular updates are then sent to the adopter, giving details on the development of the nest, any problems that may have occurred and the reasons why. They are also invite to come back and stay at the resort around the estimated time of their hatchlings' release.

This programme has been far more successful than we anticipated, and hence we had to use money we received from the guests in the form of donations to build a second hatchery to house all the nests.



After the construction of our second hatchery.

BEACH CLEAN-UP

On the 24th of September, we organised a clean-up of 3.2 km of coastline adjacent to Tanjong Jara Resort. We used the funding allocated to Lang Tengah Turtle Watch by CIMB Foundation money to carry out community development and waste management projects.

This initial clean-up managed to remove 592 kg of rubbish from the beach, just by the students alone. We feel this helped not only the turtles but the resort too, as we had often heard guests being upset about the amount of rubbish they encountered whilst walking along the beach.



School children, students and our team posing for a photograph after the beach clean-up.

This involved the help from:



GUEST SATISFACTION

We devised a feedback form which was made available for guests to complete in our Visitors' Hut. Every week we submitted completed forms to Terence Waller, General Manager of Tanjong Jara Resort for his perusal.

Our key findings from the 23 completed forms we received were as follows:

- 100% of returning Tanjong Jara guests surveyed said that their stay has been enhanced by the presence of the turtle hatchery.
- 100% of surveyed guests will recommend for their friends to come and visit Lang Tengah Turtle Watch at Tanjong Jara Resort.
- 65% of guests surveyed said they would return to Tanjong Jara just so that they can visit the turtle hatchery again.
- Lang Tengah Turtle Watch at Tanjong Jara Resort achieved an average rating of 4.75/5 with regard to the level of information divulged by our team, the management of the project and the overall experience.
- Only 13% of guests surveyed had known about the turtle project prior to their arrival.

From these results, we can infer that the new turtle hatchery at Tanjong Jara has been well received in its opening months, and is proving itself to be fast becoming one of the most popular attractions at the resort.

Lang Tengah Turtle Watch will strive to keep on pushing our guest satisfaction ratings up throughout the 2017 season and beyond. Meanwhile, the study shows that more promotion needs to be done by YTL and Tanjong Jara Resort to spread the word of this new feature to its upcoming guests.

Guest Review on Tripadvisor

"Malaysia East Coast Treasure"

Reviewed 19 July 2016

"...There are daily activities and excursions to cater for all tastes or the opportunity to simply relax by the pool or on the seashore. We watched baby turtles being released to the sea which was just magical. A superb experience."

"Amazing Stay"

Reviewed 26 July 2016

"...We played tennis every day, did yoga and relaxed around the pool and the beach. While we were there, 150 baby turtles were released as part of a conservation project. My boys loved this."

"Wonderful experience!"

Reviewed 16 August 2016

"...Activities were nicely paced and interesting but the highlight of it all was watching the release of turtle hatchlings. Leander, who was in charge of the turtle hatchery was enthusiastic and eager to share information about turtle conservation..."

"sun, sea, baby turtles, fantastic food and friendly staff..perfection"

Reviewed 22 August 2016

"...with extreme care and attention, they make the experience for the turtles as close to that of nature's intention as they possibly can. One of the truly best experiences of my life watching this event..."

"Love the Turtles"

Reviewed 7 October 2016

"We chose this hotel because it's recently started its own turtle hatchery and we were thrilled to watch daily nest checking and be involved in 3 releases of hatchlings during the week."