

2019

ANNUAL REPORT



LANG TENGAH TURTLE WATCH
TANJONG JARA RESORT

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2021

SUMMARY

- Lang Tengah Turtle Watch at Tanjong Jara Resort saved 16,357 green turtle and painted terrapin eggs, releasing 11,889 endangered hatchlings into the waters around Tanjong Jara Resort.
- For the first time, Lang Tengah Turtle Watch at Tanjong Jara Resort managed both beaches on either side of the resort, enabling us to relocate 44 endangered turtle nests from the beaches in closest proximity to the resort into our hatcheries. Tahu Tiga continued to hold reserve status to be managed by us, while we were the tender holder for Kuala Abang.
- 83% of guests rated Lang Tengah Turtle Watch 5/5 for the overall experience of the activities offered by Lang Tengah Turtle Watch during their stay.
- This year, a record 163 nests were sponsored as part of our nest adoption programme. Since Lang Tengah Turtle Watch at Tanjong Jara Resort began in 2016, over 400 nests have been saved from being sold to the market.
- Guest engagement activities were expanded to target a wider audience more often, including a weekly stall at Kampung Sucimurni.
- We removed 1,466.4 kg of rubbish from Tahu Tiga and Kuala Abang beaches, which are the beaches adjacent to Tanjong Jara Resort. This was accomplished with the help of 220 school students from four schools in the Dungun area.
- Lang Tengah Turtle Watch continued to develop our community outreach programme, with presentations in local schools and visits to our hatcheries. Over 180 students visited Tanjong Jara Resort to learn more about turtle conservation and marine pollution.

OUR TEAM



Bella Jack

Project Coordinator & Site Co-Manager

Bella graduated with an MA (Hons) in Geography from St. Andrews before completing an Environmental MSc at University College London. After spending the 2018 season as a Research Officer with LTTW, Bella became Project Coordinator and Site Co-Manager in November 2018.



Rifqah Ahmad Rostam

Site Co-Manager

Rifqah graduated with a BSc (Hons) in Marine Science from University Kebangsaan Malaysia. Having worked with the organisation for several years, in 2019 Rifqah was Co-Manager of Lang Tengah Turtle Watch at Tanjong Jara Resort.



Nur Abidah Zaaba

Conservation Officer

Abidah graduated with a BSc (Hons) in Marine Science from University Malaysia Sabah. Before joining the Lang Tengah Turtle Watch team in mid-June, Abidah worked in turtle conservation with Reef Guardian Malaysia, based in Sabah.

RESEARCH ASSISTANT INTERNS



From left to right:

Top row: Vanessa Calcinotto, Emma Matthews, Jessica Lee McNally, Jason Gan,
Second row: Ella Loeffler, Taneswarry Pathy, Lee Jia Yi, Chelsea McIntrye,
Third row: Sarah Rouse, Mary Anderson, Chan Yik Khan, Chooi Lin Quek

	Internship period	Nationality	Current/Past Study	Comments
Vanessa Calcinotto	March - May	Australian	Honours Degree in Ecology, Conservation and Genetics, Monash University Australia	Previous experience working as a research assistant with 3 different species of sea turtle as part of a PhD study.
Emma Matthews	April – June	Australian	BSc in Zoology and Ecology,	Previous conservation experience studying lemurs in Madagascar
Jessica Lee McNally	May – June	British	BSc in Animal Behaviour and Welfare, University of Plymouth	Previous experience working with Flatback, Green and Loggerhead turtles in Western Australia and Greece
Jason Gan	May – June	Malaysian	BSc Tropical Environmental Biology, Monash University Malaysia	Joined as part of an ongoing collaboration with Monash Malaysia
Ella Loeffler	May – July	Australian	BSc in Ecology and Wildlife Conservation	Previous conservation experience studying possums in Australia, presented at ICCB in Kuala Lumpur after her internship
Taneswarry Pathy	June – July	Malaysian	BSc Tropical Environmental Biology, Monash University Malaysia	Joined as part of an ongoing collaboration with Monash Malaysia
Lee Jia Yi	July - August	Malaysian	Currently studying aquatic biology at Universiti Sains Malaysia.	Joined us as part of industrial training placement from USM
Chelsea McIntyre	July - September	British	BSc Zoology, University of Manchester	Previous experience in science communication & education, working at zoos and museums in the UK
Sarah Rouse	July - September	British	BSc Biological Sciences, Oxford University	Planned to continue to study a masters in Biodiversity, Conservation and Management with Oxford University
Mary Anderson	August - October	American	Master in International Relations, London School of Economics and Political Science	Currently working for UN Women as a Consultant, took ten weeks leave to join LTTW
Chan Yik Khan	August - October	Malaysian	BSc Conservation Biology, Monash University Australia	Worked as a research assistant for 7 months at Monash Malaysia before joining us
Chooi Lin Quek	September	Malaysian	Psychology Degree, University of Nottingham.	Currently working as Human Resource Professional, previously volunteered with our island project and took leave to join us as an intern

NEST ADOPTION PROGRAMME

2019 has seen the highest number of nest adoptions since the program started in 2016. With a total of 163 nests, this figure has increased by 25% from 2018 and brings us close to our carrying capacity for nests at Tanjong Jara Resort. With three guest hatcheries and the larger research hatchery in use, we are approaching the maximum number of nests that our team is able to handle. Of these nests, 20 are from critically endangered painted terrapins and the remaining are green turtles. We have saved 16,357 eggs from being sold to the market for human consumption in 2019 and successfully released 11,889 hatchlings back to the sea. Even though we stopped purchasing nests by late August, visitors were still taking part in the nest adoption programme and were willing to wait for their nest to be purchased in the following year. As a result of this, we have more than 30 nests to be purchased when the season begins in March next year. The increase in nest adoptions from year to year has shown that our effort to create awareness among the public about the importance of conserving sea turtle populations – especially in Terengganu – has been positive.



Our very first nest incubating in the hatchery for the 2019 season.



A photo of hatchling with the nest marker to be sent to the adopter.



One of the adopted nests.

As we have a set price for our nest adoption programme but are unable to predict the exact size of each nest, we sometimes end up with excess money in our nest adoption pot. In 2019, we were able to put this money towards, buying and allocating nests on behalf of a number of local schools, as well as a polytechnic institution. The nests were purchased and dedicated to these schools to show appreciation for taking part in our beach clean-up programme, and we sent updates throughout the nest adoption process to be shared with students.

NEST INSPECTIONS

Nest inspections provide an opportunity for us to engage resort guests in the work we are doing, and offer an interactive and informative experience. We check our green turtle and painted terrapin nests in the latter stages of incubation, and inspections allow us to identify the development stage of the eggs, as well as any potential problems in the nest.

Every week we pass the daily schedule of our nest inspections to the resort to display at reception in order to inform guests about our activities. Nest inspections take place at 10 a.m, and between late May and early September we had nest inspections almost every day. Nest inspections allow us to explain the conservation process to guests, as well as the context of sea turtle conservation in Malaysia, and sea turtle biology and life cycle.



Guests observing a turtle egg during a nest inspection.



Guests seeing a hatchling during a nest inspection.



Our team members checking the egg's condition during a nest relocation.

HATCHLING RELEASES

A crater has formed at the surface of this nest, indicating that the hatchlings will be emerging soon.

Nest inspections are integral for us to assess the development stage of the nest and to know when a nest is likely to emerge. During these inspections, if we find hatchlings that appear ready to emerge later that evening, we will contact reception staff who inform guests of a scheduled hatchling release to take place at 10 p.m.

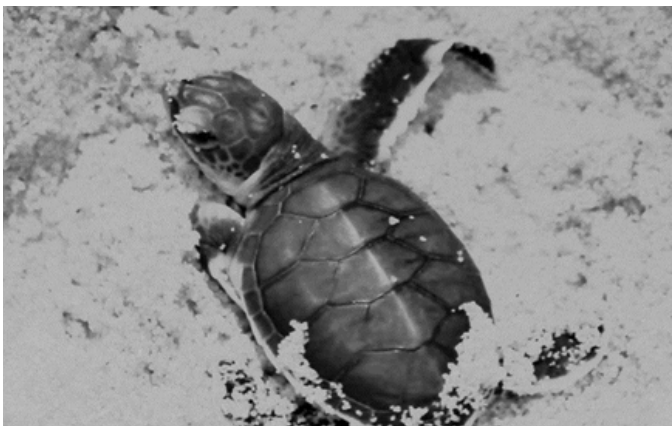
We invite guests to join us at our Visitors' Hut shortly before 10 p.m., to allow us to informally chat about the project and show a video outlining some of the work being done by the organisation. At 10 p.m. we then give a comprehensive briefing about the release, to ensure that it is carried out in a manner that avoids causing unnecessary stress to the hatchlings.



The hatchling release is carried out about 300 m away from the resort, at a location that minimises light pollution, as white light can be confusing for the hatchlings. The guests are safely guided down the beach to the release site under red light to ensure minimal disturbance to potential nesting mothers.



Hatchlings making their way to the sea (photo taken under red light and edited to black and white).



11,668

**ENDANGERED
GREEN TURTLE
HATCHLINGS**



221

**CRITICALLY
ENDANGERED
PAINTED TERRAPIN
HATCHLINGS**

KAMPUNG SUCIMURNI

This year we were invited to be part of Kampung Sucimurni by Tanjong Jara Resort. This programme allows guests to gain an insight into the Malay way of life that strongly reflects their sense of community. Happening every Saturday from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m., this programme is always a big draw for resort guests. While the guests are enjoying the Malay food and drinks and listening to traditional music, they can also come to talk to us to know more about sea turtles and our activities. We were able to talk to over 300 guests at Kampung Sucimurni this season.



Our team members in front of the booth at Kampung Sucimurni.

THE RESEARCH HATCHERY



The Jennifer Tan Research Hatchery.

The purchase of four new HOBO data loggers allowed us to monitor the temperature in each of these different environments. The addition of a weather station located in the staff quarters of the resort meant that we were able to make comparisons between weather conditions and sand conditions. We then used this data to compare to hatching success rate, to ensure we are continuing to manage our hatcheries in the best way possible.

In 2019 we continued to use The Jennifer Tan Research Hatchery to relocate nests, and also to investigate the impact of shading on nest success rate. The size and location of the hatchery meant that we were able to test three different types of shading on the hatchery; full attap, partial attap and black netting.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Local school students participating in a beach clean-up.

BEACH CLEAN-UPS

Following the successful community outreach in 2018, we decided to continue our involvement with the local community, local schools and universities by conducting five beach clean-up events this year. Overall, 220 school students across four schools were involved in Lang Tengah Turtle Watch's beach clean-ups during 2019. These events were facilitated with the aid of over 30 university students and numerous teachers and community members. Two of our beach clean-ups were sponsored by Straw Free KL.

In total 1,466.4 kg of waste was removed from beaches around Tanjong Jara Resort, of which 298.1 kg was recycled. The empowerment of the community to take care of the local environment is an incredibly important part of conservation work, as without local support conservation projects struggle to be sustainable. Cleaner beaches will result in a more suitable habitat for marine species which occur in the area, including sea turtles. This also reflects positively on guest satisfaction as they will enjoy cleaner beaches during their stay at Tanjong Jara Resort.,

SCHOOL OUTREACH PROJECT



School students joining us for a nest inspection.

In 2019 we successfully continued our educational school outreach programmes in Dungun, Terengganu. The main objective of these programmes was to raise awareness about the importance of conserving sea turtle populations and the environment. The target audience were local students in Dungun, Terengganu.

Interactive talks which highlighted the way marine pollution threatens sea turtles, as well as information on their

cycle were presented by the Lang Tengah Turtle Watch team to 225 students at a local school in Dungun.

In addition to that, a total of 188 students from three different schools in Dungun were invited to visit the Lang Tengah Turtle Watch hatchery at Tanjong Jara Resort. The students were able to learn more about turtles, the threats that they face from marine pollution and were even able to observe our nest checks.

THE RANGERS

In 2019, two beaches were under our supervision and as such, we collaborated with two rangers who could patrol each beach. En. Rani was in charge of patrolling Tahu Tiga Beach whilst En. Aziz patrolled Kuala Abang Beach. Both rangers contacted the Lang Tengah Turtle Watch team if a nesting mother was found during their patrol. With their help, we managed to relocate six nests from Kuala Abang Beach and 38 nests from Tahu Tiga Beach.



En. Rani watching the turtle after she finishes laying her eggs.

GUEST SATISFACTION

In 2019, 100 guests completed feedback forms after visiting the Visitors' Hut for a nest check, hatchling release or an informal visit during our operating hours. Analysis of this feedback highlighted the following results.

- 91% of returning guests surveyed felt that the resort had been enhanced by the establishment of the turtle project.
- 23% of guests surveyed were first-time visitors who had been recommended to stay at the resort specifically to experience the turtle conservation activities on offer.
- Guests surveyed consistently complimented the approachable nature and extensive knowledge of the Lang Tengah Turtle Watch team.
- 83% of guests rated Lang Tengah Turtle Watch 5/5 for the overall experience of the activities offered by Lang Tengah Turtle Watch during their stay.
- 79% of guests surveyed said they would return to the resort specifically to visit the turtle project again.
- 100% of guests surveyed would recommend Lang Tengah Turtle Watch at Tanjong Jara Resort to friends/family/colleagues.

Lang Tengah Turtle Watch at Tanjong Jara continues to be an attraction for guests, who value its presence at the resort. We had over 3,000 attendees to our hatchling releases this season, with many of those guests also coming for an informal chat at our Visitors' Hut, or also attending a nest inspection. We continue to review our protocol and methods, to build on the feedback we receive from guests, and ensure that we are achieving the highest standards possible.

The most common feedback we received from guests was about Lang Tengah Turtle Watch's presence at the resort, and that guests would appreciate knowing more about the project from an earlier stage in their visit. Guests also mentioned that there could be more signage around the resort, to make it easier to find the Visitors' Hut and hatcheries.

GUEST REVIEW ON TRIPADVISOR

"Laid Back Vacation"

Reviewed May 2019

"[...] If you are lucky, you are able to catch the turtle hatchlings release as they have a hatchery station within the resort. Great education on conservation of the endangered species. More signage on the location of the station would be helpful too as we were not able to find the station directly without asking for help at nelayan [...]"

"Beautiful Place to Relax Your Mind and Body"

Reviewed May 2019

"[...] By the way if you are lucky enough you may be able to watch an event of releasing turtles hatchlings to the sea and that is really awesome experience. [...]"

"Amazing Weekend Getaway"

Reviewed July 2019

"[...] A point I'd like to commend TJR on is their partnership with Lang Tengah Turtle Watch (LTTW) in conservation efforts for our turtles. We were privileged to have the opportunity to observe hatchlings being released into the sea. Thank you YTL and I hope this continues. Shout out to Chelsea from LTTW for her passion and efforts in turtle conservation. [...]"

"Affable and Charming Paradise"

Reviewed July 2019

"[...] Our highlight was a visit to the Lang Tengah Turtle Watch hatchery (LTTW). It is located on the beach diagonally in front of the Nelayan Restaurant. In fact, visiting LTTW was our reason to make a stop at Tanjong Jara. We were fortunate to have witnessed 2 releases on our 2 nights' stay. Check the standing notice board at the main lobby at 6 pm daily to know if there is any hatchling release on each night. The hatchling releases are done at 10 pm if any (closed during monsoon season). If you are unable to witness any hatchling release, LTTW staff/volunteers conduct a short but informative hatchery tour at 10 am daily. Hope this meaningful partnership between TJR and LTTW will continue. [...]"

"A Great Break"

Reviewed July 2019

"[...] Watching the release of sea turtles at night was a learning experience for the family. [...]"

"Perfection"

Reviewed July 2019

"[...] The turtle conservation team on site, I felt really added something unique to the resort also, all team members were friendly and so informative and were happy and encouraging for guests to get involved. We were lucky enough to watch a turtle lay her eggs on the beach, and we adapted the nest. So special! [...]"

"Paradise"

Reviewed September 2019

"[...] Further down the beach, there were huts for the Turtle eggs. We were very fortunate to witness a turtle release.... it was really wonderful to see them all heading out to the sea. [...]"