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My Research About Olive Ridley Sea Turtles

SUMMARY

The olive ridley turtle is named for the generally greenish color of its skin and shell, or carapace. It is closely related to the Kemp's ridley, with the primary distinction being that olive ridleys are found only in warmer waters, including the southern Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans.

WHY IMPORTANT

Many governments have protections for olive ridleys, but still, eggs are taken and nesting females are slaughtered for their meat and skin. Fishing nets also take a large toll, frequently snagging and drowning these turtles. Though the olive ridley is widely considered the most abundant of the marine turtles, by all estimates, it is in trouble. Rough estimates put the worldwide population of nesting females at about 800,000, but its numbers, particularly in the western Atlantic, have declined precipitously. The United States lists the western Atlantic population of olive ridleys as endangered and all other populations as threatened.

THE PROBLEM

Sea turtles are one of the very few animals to eat sea grass. Like normal lawn grass, sea grass needs to be constantly cut short to be healthy and help it grow across the sea floor rather than just getting longer grass blades. Sea turtles and manatees act as grazing animals that cut the grass short and help maintain the health of the sea grass beds. Over the past decades, there has been a decline in sea grass beds. This decline may be linked to the lower numbers of sea turtles.

THE SOLUTION

Here are a few things that can be done to help save sea turtles. We can make sure that there are no lights on nesting beaches. The lights disorient them. We also need to make sure not to disturb nesting females, no matter how interesting it is to get close and watch. We also need to pick up our trash to make sure no trash gets into our oceans.

WHAT I AM GOING TO DO ABOUT IT

I am planning on visiting a local beach and cleaning up any trash that I see. Even if sea turtles do not use the beach, we need to reduce the trash in the ocean and trash can wash from one beach to another. I am also going to ask my family to change to biodegradable cleaners that are safer for the environment because chemicals from our homes can wash into the oceans.

HOW I AM PARTICIPATING IN THE FESTIVAL

I am going to do the art badge and paint a picture of a sea turtle that I want to enter into the festival.

SEARCH TERMS I USED

Here is my list of search terms:

olive ridley sea turtles

why are sea turtles important

what can I do to help sea turtles