



Join US!



The Walk for Turtles is one of the main projects for Help Our Penyu, HOPE, a Malaysian registered society (2103-10-WKL). The collection of nesting sea turtle numbers is vital for their conservation but not all the beaches in Terengganu are currently assessed not until HOPE initiated the Walk for Turtles project. The project provides invaluable data which decision makers would not otherwise have. The Walk for Turtles 2011 is an 18 day walk starting on

World Sea Turtle Day (16th June), we will visit every beach in Terengganu (mainland and islands). The team will collect invaluable sea turtle data from 300km of beach, conduct turtle awareness sessions at 6 primary schools, visit 6 turtle conservation projects and visit 2 community groups. The data from the 2010 survey identified a significant mainland population in Setiu which led to extra surveys being conducted to help assist WWF-Malaysia who run a sea turtle hatchery in the area. The walk not only collects turtle nesting data and spreads turtle conservation awareness but it is UNIFYING sea turtle conservation in Terengganu.

Be part of the Survey and join us in the Walk For Turtles 2011!!



Tour 1 – R. Abang to P. Kapas

Cost RM690 (add-on RM100 for airport pickup)

Duration 5 days 4 nights

Tuesday 21st June

You will need to arrive at Rantau Abang no later than midday (pick up from Kuala Terengganu can be arranged). In the afternoon you can help with the awareness session at SMK Rantau Abang including a beach clean. In the evening we will camp on the beach at Rantau Abang which is famed for Leatherback turtles. At Rantau Abang they have shops and a toilet block so you can have a fresh water shower.

Wednesday 22nd June

Its an early morning wake up at 5.30am, breakfast and then ready to walk at 6am. We will be surveying the beach for turtle tracks from 6am til approximately 10am. We will be resting in a small village called Jambo Bongkok. During the break we normally first take a cool dip in the sea then we all cook lunch together which is typically rice or noodles with fresh fish. We start walking again at 2.30pm and survey the beach until 6pm. By nightfall we will be at Gong Balai where we camp on the beach near to the village. Unfortunately we are unable to take a freshwater shower, bathing in the sea is highly recommended. Dinner will be basic - rice, vegetables and fresh fish.

Thursday 23rd June

Another very early morning wake up but this time we take our minivan to start walking on the northern side of the river at Gong Balai. By 10am we will reach Taman Pulau Kerengga. At this location there is an outside source of freshwater so we can take a needed shower. After lunch we conduct our Walk for Turtles awareness event at SMK Pulau Kerengga. After the event we take some much needed rest and camp at Taman Pulau Kerengga.

Friday 24th June

Today we survey the beach up to Marang. We shower in the toilet blocks in Marang and take lunch at a local restaurant. We will run our 4th awareness session in conjunction with SMK Marang. After the event we have dinner and set up camp just outside Marang.

Saturday 25th June

This morning we take a boat to Kapas Island to survey the beaches and talk to the local resort owner. We then take another boat to Gemia Island and learn about their turtle conservation activities. We take lunch at Gemia and then take a 2pm boat back to Marang. We now say a sad farewell to all as the team heads off to survey the beaches north of Marang. We can arrange for airport transfer if you request.

Data Collection

Currently the only sea turtle nesting data which is collected in Terengganu is through nests being submitted to official hatcheries. This method however is clinically flawed as the egg collectors, as quote from the Department of Fisheries, would rather sell the turtle eggs they have collected to the market for human consumption rather than to be incubated at official hatcheries causing significantly inaccurate population data to be collected. It has been suggested by some that over 50% of the nests are being sold to the market and thus not counted in the annual census.

Turtle track surveys are the number one globally accepted tool for the large-scale collection of sea turtle nesting numbers. The methodology is relatively simple. When a turtle nests on a beach they leave a very distinguishable track in the sand. It is estimated that the track lasts for 7 days however the longevity of the track is dependent on the weather, but 7 days is the average. The track width is a good indication of the turtles width and can give be used to assess tracks made by the same individual turtle and also the species of turtle. When a turtle nests it digs a large pit, depending on the shape and features of the pit we can tell whether the turtle has laid eggs or not. For example, the only time we say there is a turtle nest is when we see signs of a turtle covering over the nest. If she did not lay any eggs she would not attempt to cover the nest. We collect this data along with the GPS co-ordinates of the location. The data is used to assess the turtle nesting population in the region surveyed. For the 2010 report please visit this website <http://www.helpourpenyu.com/walkforturtles/walkforturtles/2010-report>

The report is shared with other organisations related to sea turtles in Malaysia and made available online to the general public. One of the main outcomes from 2010 was the high number of turtle nestings in the Setiu district. As a result of the survey Help Our Penyu are now working in partnership with WWF-Malaysia. Help Our Penyu are surveying the area four times in 2011 to collect a more thorough population census for the Setiu District to help WWF-Malaysia assess the percentage of nests being submitted to their hatchery in Kampong Mangkok. The collaboration between Help Our Penyu demonstrates the potential that the walk has for not only collecting valuable data but at unifying sea turtle conservation in Terengganu.



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Tour 2 - Setiu to Perhentian

Awareness

Cost RM900 (add-on RM100 for airport pickup and RM100 if you want to stay in a hotel during our stay in Mangkok)

Duration 5 days 4 nights

Thursday 30th June

Tourists must arrive before midday at Kampong Mangkok about 40km north of Kuala Terengganu. After lunch we will conduct the last Walk for Turtles awareness event at SMK Mangkok. In the evening we go for dinner at a local restaurant and drift down the Setiu river on a fire fly cruise. When we get back from the cruise you have the option to help WWF-Malaysia with their sea turtle hatchery duties. You have a choice to stay in a room or camp on the beach.

Friday 1st July

We will wake up early and take a boat to the mouth of the Setiu river we will then walk back along the beach south until we return to Kg Mangkok. We will take lunch with the ladies of PEWANIS and then join them in the afternoon to replant mangrove trees. You will also get the chance to visit the Turtle Conservation Centres. Again you have the choice to sleep in a room or tent.

Saturday 2nd July

We wake up early taking the boat to the mouth of the Setiu River but this time to the northern side of the mouth. We continue to walk northward and survey this beach for turtle nesting activity. We take lunch at a small restaurant and rest. At 2.30pm we start walking again to survey the penultimate leg of our journey. We spend our last night camping at Bukit Kelung where we can see the Perhentian Islands. There are freshwater showering facilities. We will cook dinner together on the camping stoves and have rice, vegetables and fresh fish.

Sunday 3rd July

We wake up at 5.30am to a sunrise behind the Perhentian Islands – our finishing line. We walk towards Kuala Besut and finish our morning session at Tok Bali. From Tok Bali we head off to the Perhentian islands where we survey and walk around the islands and finish at the Perhentian Village.

Monday 4th July

Take a much deserved lay in. Follow a midday boat back to Kuala Besut (you have the option for an airport transfer).

Teaching the children about respect of sea turtles and how they can help the turtles is vital to our work. Sea turtle hatchlings do not lay eggs until they are at least 25 years old meaning the children we are educating at these events will be adults by the time the hatchlings released in 2011 will come back to nest.

The main topics we will focus on our turtle egg consumption, the dangers of litter and how to behave around a nesting turtle.

Anuar Abdullah, a Dungun-born artist and marine conservationist is joining the entire walk and will lead the awareness sessions. He will use story telling whilst drawing as the main tool to educate the children in an interactive way.

15 mins	story telling
30mins	Playing educational games
15 mins	Refreshments
15 mins	dangers of litter
45 mins	Beach clean
30min to 1 hour	Rubbish art
15mins	Prize giving

The sessions last for approximately 3 hours and will engage the children in fun activities whilst helping them to learn about sea turtles.



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Impact of Walk for Turtles 2010

Data Collection

A total of 106 nests, 40 false nests and 60 false crawls were recorded in 2010. Using nesting data from beaches where intensive turtle conservation is conducted, annual numbers of turtle nests from the surveyed area were estimated to be in excess of 3095 with over 3795 nests for the whole of Terengganu. Unfortunately the nesting numbers in 2010 are expected to be high, due to a natural cycle in sea turtle nesting, where some years turtles nest in high numbers and others in low numbers due to the length of migration (1-5 years) by sea turtles. The distribution of the nests suggests the basic infrastructure for sea turtle conservation is adequate with hatcheries being present at the majority of the top 20 nesting sites. Efforts however must be focused on increasing egg deposition by egg collectors. One area of concern is the 40km stretch from Merang to Bukit Keluang. WWF-Malaysia run a sea turtle hatchery in the area but numbers of nests being incubated are far lower than expected due to the project being new. Furthermore the highest density of turtle nests surveyed was just 4.6nests/km/week. A medium density of turtle nests is considered to be above 7 nests/km/week (Canbolat, 2004) therefore it is clear to see that the nesting population of Terengganu is severely impoverished and conservation efforts must be increased before all four species go extinct.

Awareness

In 2010 we ran the following awareness events

1. a 2 day awareness event at One Utama;
2. talks at Nottingham University, ISKL, Green Drinks and Aquaria KLCC;
3. A stall and an interactive quiz at the Eco Film festival;

We were also followed by 8TV Quickie for 2 days and gained coverage in many newspapers including the New Straits Times, The Star, China Press and the Utusan. Hitz read out turtle facts before our main event as well.

Our best form of awareness was through our social media, videos and live tweets which kept our 4,000 follows in contact with our progress as they happened.

In 2011 our awareness campaign will be focused on the local communities of coastal Terengganu through our school sessions and by allowing the general public to join our walk. We will continue our live tweet and video uploads to our social media network and ask radio stations and newspapers give daily updates of our progress.

Contact Us

Website - www.helpourpenyu.com

Twitter - [@helpourpenyu](https://twitter.com/helpourpenyu)

Facebook - [Help Our Penyu - empowering the Malaysian public](https://www.facebook.com/helpourpenyu)

Email

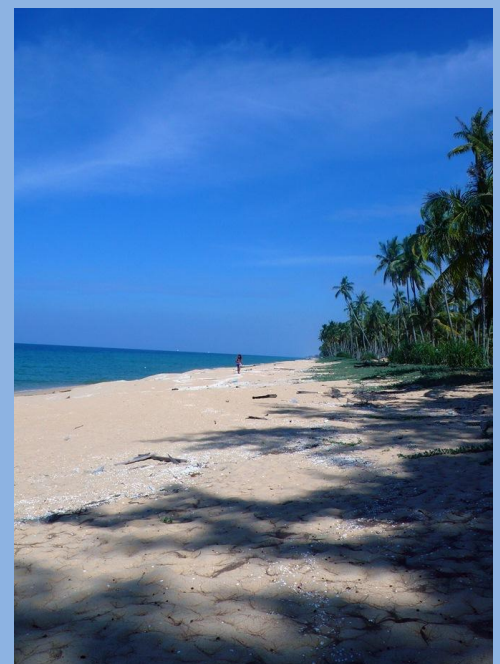
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