

# iVIVA LA TORTUGA!

Newsletter of the **Sea Turtle Restoration Project** of Turtle Island Restoration Network

Issue No. 1, 2007

## KEEPING PLAYA GRANDE SAFE FOR LEATHERBACKS

**PLAYA GRANDE IN COSTA RICA IS CONSIDERED** to be one of the world's most beautiful beaches. For decades, tourists, surfers and nature lovers have come to experience its scenic beauty, waves and wildlife.

**ANOTHER TRAVELER HAS BEEN VISITING THE BEACH FAR LONGER** – the Pacific leatherback sea turtle, which has graced the earth's oceans since before the time of the dinosaurs.

**PACIFIC LEATHERBACKS ARE CRITICALLY ENDANGERED.** They've declined more than 90% in the last 20 years – from more than 90,000 to possibly as few as 2,300 nesting females. Even at Playa Grande, the strongest leatherback beach in the Eastern Pacific, nesting has declined from nearly 1,400 sea turtles in 1989 to less than 50 in 2006.

**COSTA RICA**, recognizing the importance of protecting leatherbacks, established Las Baulas (which means leatherbacks) National Marine Park in 1994. The Park includes the Playa Grande beach and 150 meters of land inland of the high tide line.

**THE NATIONAL PARK WAS CREATED** to protect the leatherback sea turtles after decades of egg poaching by local people and businesses, and impacts from international fishing fleets. Today, the beach is protected and local guides lead visitors to see the nesting turtles without disturbing them.

**BUT THIS SAFE HAVEN FOR NESTING SEA TURTLES IS UNDER THREAT.** Developers are creating legal confusion over the original language of the National Park law and pressuring the Costa Rican government not to annex critical inland habitat. Their schemes call for tourist hotels and luxury vacation homes that would tower over the beach.

**CURRENTLY, THE SEA TURTLE RESTORATION PROJECT IS WORKING** with

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Alex and Ingrid with 2006 field coordinators at Ostional

Photo: ©PRETOMA

## Nesting Beach Protection in Costa Rica

**STRP WORKS WITH OUR SISTER** organization PRETOMA to monitor six sea turtle nesting beaches on Costa Rica's Pacific Coast. Members can take part by becoming a "PRETOMA Participant". Learn more at [www.sea-turtles.org/ecotours.cfm](http://www.sea-turtles.org/ecotours.cfm).

**STRP AND PRETOMA** began working at Punta Banco in 1996, and now also work at Playa Caletas, Playa San Miguel, Costa de Oro, Camaronal and Playa Naranjo.

**ALEXANDER GAOS AND INGRID YANEZ**, a husband and wife team, coordinate staff biologists and PRETOMA Participants who walk the beach every night to monitor nesting turtles, prevent egg poaching, and when necessary, move the nests to protected hatcheries.

**THROUGH THESE PROGRAMS** and with your support, we have protected 450,000 sea turtle eggs and released more than 300,000 hatchlings to the sea.

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A Pacific leatherback sea turtle nests on a Costa Rican beach; map showing location of Playa Grande; developer's sign at Playa Grande

Photo: left-©INGRID YANEZ

## FROM THE DIRECTOR:

### **Food for Thought: Can We Eat Our Way Out of Marine Ecosystem Collapse?**

OCEAN ACTIVISTS HAVE BEEN STRUGGLING FOR DECADES to save the marine ecosystem using every creative tool at their disposal. Many organizations have focused on charismatic species such as whales and dolphins to get the public and decision-makers focused on the direct take and incidental capture of these species by industrial fishing fleets. Boycotts of whaling nations and tuna corporations have significantly helped curb the decimation of these marine mammals.

TWO CAMPAIGNS I WAS INTIMATELY INVOLVED WITH helped prevent hundreds of thousands of sea turtles from drowning in shrimp nets and hundreds of thousands of dolphins from drowning in tuna nets. These campaigns have led to technological fixes that have helped ameliorate the immediate problem and generated eco-labeling schemes such as dolphin-safe tuna and turtle-safe® shrimp. Even 20 years ago, in the height of the tuna-dolphin campaign, some of us were also asking “What about the tuna?”

NOW WE KNOW THE ANSWER. Not only are marine mammals, sea turtles and seabirds being devastated as the collateral damage of industrial fishing, but the fish themselves are disappearing at an alarming rate, further threatening the collapse of ocean ecosystems and the food security of millions who depend on the sea as their primary source of protein.

IN MORE RECENT YEARS, two new approaches are being tried by the environmental community. One is a broader eco-labeling tool initiative by the Marine Stewardship Council which attempts to label fisheries as “sustainable” by focusing on the current status of fish stocks and whether there are regulations in place to prevent them from being over-fished. Another is the proliferation of “wallet cards” that encourage consumers to make “more sustainable” seafood choices based on similar criteria. Both of these approaches consider the “bycatch” issue in their evaluations. But will today’s fish in the “OK to eat” category end up in the “Avoid” category if all seafood lovers follow the wallet card advice?

AGAIN, THESE ARE IMPORTANT TOOLS FOR EDUCATING the public to ocean threats and providing individuals with concrete actions to reduce their personal impact. They are definitely an important start. But I worry that the unintended consequence of these approaches is the promotion of the idea that we can eat our way out of the crisis by making “wiser” choices, without considering: how much is too much?

CAN WE EAT OUR WAY OUT OF THE CURRENT OCEAN CRISIS and reverse the trajectory? I am afraid we can’t. Those who want to truly leave healthy oceans for future generations may have to take the advice of Sylvia Earle, the Jacques Cousteau of our times, and enjoy our fish swimming in the oceans instead of swimming in butter.

¡Viva la Tortuga!

*Todd Ste*

Todd Steiner

Visit our Web Site: [www.seaturtles.org](http://www.seaturtles.org)

## KEEPING PLAYA GRANDE SAFE

*Continued from page 1*

an international coalition of wildlife conservation groups, scientists and caring members like you to urge the Costa Rican government to stand up to these private foreign land developers and annex key inland habitat into the National Park.

Each fall and winter, leatherbacks crawl out of the waves onto the beach, lay their eggs and return to sea. About two months later, tiny black hatchlings emerge from the sandy nests and crawl towards the brightest horizon, the ocean, to begin their lives at sea.

But if hotels and other developments are built on the section of the beach where the most turtles nest, the lights will disorient the hatchlings. Scientists have found that hatchlings will use up their precious energy crawling inland towards artificial lights rather than towards the sea, and are likely to die of exhaustion or being preyed upon by animals.

All this could mean fewer leatherback hatchlings reaching the sea.

Costa Rica’s State Attorney has recently ruled that the private lands should be annexed to the National Park immediately. But the Costa Rican government’s delays are threatening the future of this endangered species habitat.

Hundreds of sea turtle biologists have begun a call to Costa Rica to immediately protect Playa Grande from development. Currently, international donors to this project have contributed more than \$5,000,000 to begin the national park annexation.

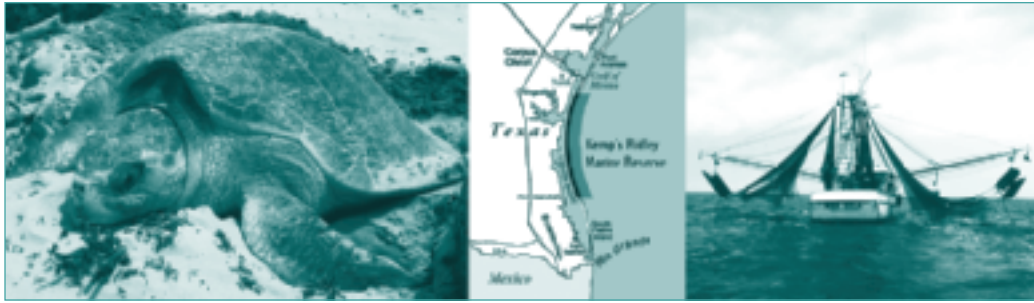
Action by Costa Rica’s government is critical to help the leatherbacks recover. STRP, with your support, will do all it can to urge Costa Rica to make Playa Grande’s first visitors – the leatherbacks – top priority for protection.

Take action! Write a letter appealing to the Costa Rican President to act now to protect the precious few Pacific leatherback sea turtles left in our oceans by protecting ALL of Las Baulas National Park. See page 8 for details.



Photo © DAVID PALANKE

Tiny leatherback hatchlings on Costa Rican beach



Kemp's Ridley nesting on a Texas beach; map showing Kemp's Ridley Marine Reserve; shrimp trawler in the Gulf of Mexico

## Protections in Gulf Waters Lead to Record Kemp's Ridley Nestings

**HISTORICALLY, SHRIMP TRAWLERS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS ONE OF THE MAJOR CAUSES OF DEATH OF THE CRITICALLY ENDANGERED KEMP'S RIDLEY SEA TURTLE IN THE GULF OF MEXICO.** In 1988, Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs), a simple fishing gear modification that reduces sea turtle deaths, were required on shrimp trawlers in the Gulf. However, since there was little enforcement of the TEDs law, shrimpers often did not install them, or tied the escape flaps shut.

**STRP REALIZED** that in order to better protect the Kemp's ridley off their prime Texas nesting site of Padre Island, a shrimp fishing time-area closure was needed in those waters. In 2000, with our members' support, we convinced then-Governor George W. Bush's Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to close state waters to shrimp fishing during the critical months of the year when the Kemp's ridley nests in Texas.

**AS A RESULT,** no shrimping is allowed from December 1 until May 15 in five of the state's nine nautical miles from Corpus Christi to the Mexican border.

### SO WHAT HAVE BEEN THE RESULTS OF THIS CLOSURE?

In the six years leading to the closure, there were 60 nests in total laid on Texas beaches.

But in the six years following, there have been 259 nests - *four times as many.*

**IN 2006, WE WERE THRILLED** to see record numbers of nesting Kemp's ridley sea turtles on Texas beaches -102 nests in total, eclipsing any number from the entire eighteen-year period of primarily relying on the TEDs to reduce deaths.

**OTHER FACTORS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS INCREASE** - the 'headstarting' of thousands of hatchlings, the protection of the Mexican beach, forced reduction of shrimp fishing effort due to high fuel costs, the devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and actions taken by the State of Texas and the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council to reduce bycatch.

**HOWEVER,** we believe that this recent time-area closure has been the key piece of the management puzzle that has allowed the Kemp's population to rebound in Texas.

**THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW** time-area fishing closures can help endangered marine species populations recover – and also a lesson that gear modifications alone cannot protect species from fisheries impacts and that other management tools must be in play simultaneously.

**We could not have achieved this victory without our members' and partners' support - we hope that you are as proud as we are.** Please send Governor Rick Perry a message thanking him for the closure that has been in effect since 2000 resulting in an increase in nesting on Texas beaches - and ask him to take action to make that closure last all year. Go to: <http://www.governor.state.tx.us/contact>

## Recent Activities of the Gulf Office

- **Galveston Mayor Lyda Thomas** proclaimed March 3 Sea Turtle Saturday and welcomed 150 attendees from as far away as Phoenix, Arizona to the event, hosted by Texas A&M University Campus at Galveston. Co-sponsored by STRP and its Gulf of Mexico HEART (Help Endangered Animals-Ridley Turtles) office and the University, presentations included fascinating information about sea turtles of the Western Gulf of Mexico, the Kemp's ridley recovery status, current NOAA Fisheries research projects, and recovery of hooked or injured sea turtles. A volunteer training session stressed the need for beach patrols on the north Texas coast beginning in April, and petitions were signed asking for protection for Kemp's ridley year round in waters adjacent to the Padre Island National Seashore.
- **TEXAS COASTAL CAPTAINS ARE NEEDED!** Anyone living on or near the north Texas coast is invited to volunteer as a Coastal Patrol Captain. He or she will be asked to organize a group of volunteers to walk Texas beaches looking for sea turtle nesters during April, May and June. Please contact Gulf Office Director Carole Allen, 281-444-6204, [Carole@seaturtles.org](mailto:Carole@seaturtles.org).
- **The Meadows Foundation** gives a boost to public awareness! 200 decals showing a nesting Kemp's ridley sea turtle and the STRP 800 TURTLE-5 number are now on trash receptacles in the Galveston Island and Bolivar Peninsula area. Student volunteers from Texas A&M University applied the decals, which were purchased from a grant by the Foundation.



Volunteers apply awareness decals on Texas beach trash can

# Tribal Villagers Change Attitudes to Conserve Leatherback Turtles

## RECENT ACTIVITIES OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC AND CENTRAL AMERICAN OFFICES



Photo © S. Eckhart

Nesting leatherback; tribal leaders & STRP representatives pose in Tokain after deciding to participate in Conservation Deed workshops

**MORE THAN 40 KILOMETERS OF PRISTINE BLACK SANDY BEACH STRETCHES ALONG THE NORTH COAST OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA**, one and a half hours' drive from Madang town. This beach, where the local people once slaughtered female leatherbacks for protein, is now gradually becoming a safe haven for this critically endangered species thanks to efforts by STRP staff member Wences Magun and partners.

**FIVE THOUSAND INDIGENOUS TRIBAL VILLAGERS** from seven major villages - Karkum, Mirap, Yadigam, Tokain, Malas, Dibor, and Sabente - who share in the bounty of their rich marine resources have traditionally consumed leatherbacks.

**LOCAL FOLKLORE** tells of a woman escaping from the brutal abuse of her husband by taking refuge in the sea and transforming herself into a leatherback sea turtle. She later returns to feed her children with fish and with her own flesh. For decades these tribespeople have killed, shared and eaten leatherbacks.

**HOWEVER**, these villagers were unaware of leatherbacks' status as an endangered species as designated by the IUCN (World Conservation Union). That changed when STRP Director Todd Steiner, Todd's wife Dr. Lynette McLamb, Campaign Director Peter Fugazzotto, and Western Pacific Campaigner Wences Magun visited local villages in January 2007 and spread the message about the leatherback's precarious situation.

**STRP STAFF** explained that the very same endangered leatherbacks that feed a few miles from our California headquarters migrate across the Pacific to nest in New Guinea, and that we all had a role to play in protecting these gentle creatures. Villagers shared their observations that the once-large numbers of leatherbacks that visit their nesting beaches annually have declined since the 1990s. They are now beginning to understand why it is very important to protect and restore the population.

**FEARING THAT CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS** will not see the unique, gentle leatherback sea turtles, the villagers have embarked on a community-driven conservation program. Assisted by Gildipasi, their community based organization, about 50 indigenous clan leaders and villagers elected by their communities to be STRP representatives met on Saturday, March 10th, to support and participate in a nine-week Conservation Deed workshop.

**THE FIRST LEADERSHIP TRAINING WORKSHOP** was held March 19 through 21, with further workshops spread through out the year, culminating with a monitoring and evaluation program in December 2007.

**VILLAGERS' CONSERVATION EFFORTS** have so far saved more than two hundred leatherback hatchlings and ten adults. Had it not been for the rising sea level and a furious storm that hit their coastline on March 6th, devastating and destroying leatherback nests, many more hatchlings would have been saved.

**PROTECTING THE NESTING BEACHES OF PNG** is but a piece of the international Pacific leatherback conservation puzzle which includes addressing the impacts of industrial fishing. These recent developments in PNG are a positive step forward in the fight for a future for this magnificent ocean voyager.

• *STRP's Western Pacific Region Campaigner Wences Magun* attended the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission meeting Committee in Manila, Philippines last August, to gain knowledge of all the fishing activities from the Pacific Island countries and to advocate for industrial fishing time-area closures and more action to protect sea turtles and other marine species.

• *Wence's media outreach work* resulted in a story in the major PNG paper and a radio interview focusing on the leatherback sea turtle crisis. He is also working with local artists to design and develop culturally appropriate educational materials. He has developed a pool of PNG-based volunteers to assist with his work in the country.

• *Our campaign calling on the Costa Rican president* to foster a responsible shrimp fishery is well underway. Costa Rican shrimp trawlers have been reluctant to use TEDs (turtle excluder devices), which allow accidentally caught sea turtles to escape. The fleet has been estimated to catch up to 15,632 sea turtles per year.

• *Last August the Costa Rican government* announced the creation of Caletas-Ario, a new national wildlife refuge and marine protected area on the Pacific coast, to protect critically endangered leatherback sea turtles and other species. This is a major victory for STRP/PRETOMA and other organizations which have been promoting the refuge for years. Scientists estimate that fewer than 1000 adult females nest on the Pacific coasts of North, Central and South America, and for this species to avoid extinction, every single one must be protected.



Caption: Playa Caletas, Costa Rica



Swimming leatherback; drawing of a drift gillnet and fishing vessel

## PACIFIC LEATHERBACKS PROTECTED OFF CALIFORNIA AND OREGON

**A GREAT VICTORY WAS ACHIEVED** for the Pacific leatherback sea turtle and other marine species when the Sea Turtle Restoration Project, in coalition with other environmental groups, successfully fought off a proposal to allow drift-gillnet fishing back into the Leatherback Conservation Area off the Northern California and Oregon coasts during 2006.

**STRP CAMPAIGNER KAREN STEELE** gathered the support of 48 organizations and over 220 scientists to speak out against this proposed exempted fishing permit (EFP) that would have allowed up to 30 drift gillnet vessels back into the Leatherback Conservation Area. This protected area has been closed to drift gillnet fishing from August 15 to November 15 each year since 2001 to protect the leatherbacks while they forage in the area. Legal actions by the Sea Turtle Restoration Project and coalition partner Center for Biological Diversity also helped to prevent the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) from issuing this permit.

**WE WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE** the important part all our members played in keeping this protection in place with over 10,000 public comments received by the Pacific Fisheries Management Council and NMFS in 2006 opposing any plans to reopen this protected area. Congratulations and thanks to all of you who spoke up on behalf of the sea turtles! Based on predictions by NMFS on how many sea turtles would have been caught by this fishery, up to 162 leatherback sea turtles may have been saved from capture in drift gillnets in California and Oregon since this closure was put in place. That is a huge success in protecting this critically endangered species.

**WHILE THE LEATHERBACK CONSERVATION AREA** remained a safe haven for the leatherback in 2006, NMFS will again consider issuing this exempted fishing permit to the drift gillnet fishery in 2007. A second proposal is also under consideration by NMFS for 2007 that could allow a swordfish longline fishery to begin along the U.S. west coast where it has been banned for many years and is well known for its capture and drowning of leatherbacks. With the support of our members, we will continue to fight to prevent the issuing of these permits and keep these effective and important protection measures in place for the Pacific leatherback and other marine species.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

**PLEASE CONTACT:** *the National Marine Fisheries Service asking them to deny the drift gillnet and longline exempted fishing permits and keep important protections in place for the Pacific leatherback sea turtle:*

*Dr. William Hogarth, Director, NOAA Fisheries Service, 1315 East West Highway, SSMC3, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Phone: (301) 713-2379, fax: (301) 713-2384, bill.hogarth@noaa.gov.*



Leatherback sea turtle caught on a longline hook

### Recent Activities of the Save the Leatherback Campaign

- **STRP Campaigner Karen Steele** gave a stirring presentation at the 27th International Sea Turtle Symposium in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina in February, attended by 1400 sea turtle conservationists from 21 countries – the biggest attendance ever. In her talk Karen explained why the Leatherback Conservation Area off the US West coast must be maintained to save sea turtle lives and as a model protection to disseminate abroad.
- **In response to our letters**, California legislators are beginning to raise their voices in support of our position on the Pacific drift gillnet and longline fishery issue. Senator Carole Migden and Assembly Member Jared Huffman have both responded with support and others have expressed interest.
- **STRP sent a comment letter** to the National Marine Fisheries Service and an action alert to our members on NMFS's proposal to remove the seven-day delay in closing the Hawaii-based shallow-set longline fishery after it has reached its limit on sea turtle incidental captures.
- **In March** we wrote to the Pacific Fisheries Management Council and NOAA Fisheries Service opposing the proposal to allow shallow-set swordfish longline fishing for the first time within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the U.S. west coast. As of mid-March, 138 scientists from 27 countries had signed the letter.

# THANK YOU!!

**There has been a wonderful outpouring of support for STRP's work in 2006-07. The following interns, volunteers, and pro bono professionals have been supporting our work around the globe.**

**In California:** Mitchell Bolt, Tara Bushore, Mike Colosimo, Anthony Copioli, Donna Howe, Kathleen Kelley, Sandy Klein, Timo McNamee, Peter Openheimer, Daphne Plump, Susan Sakmar, Estelle Servanin, Mike Van Velkenberg, Beth Verdekal, Steve Waldron, Marjorie Witter, Barbara Zdan.

**The following businesses and bands donated funds, refreshments or their time and talents to help make our Fall Fundraising Picnic in California a success:** Blue Water Kayaking, Circle Bank, Cove Mussel Company, Drivesavers Data Recovery, Eat My Kookies Bakery, Good Earth Foods, Hain Celestial, Howard Folksanger and Strange Angels, Il Fornaio, Jeff Myers and the Made of Steel Strings Band, Lagunitas Brewery, Lagunitas Deli, Matt Lauer and Spindrift, Sweet Things Bakery, Tomales Bay Oyster Company, Trader Joe's.

**In Papua New Guinea:** John Amos, Florence Bunare, Poin Caspar, Rhonda Clement, Doreen Danti, Raachel Sapery James, Capistrano Jolly, Alfred Kaket, Robin Kawat, Bernard Lolot, Vergil Los Narokobi, Willie Mayang, Robert Miria, Audie Mondono, Yat Paol, Maru Rachel, Lama Sarufa, and STRP volunteers in Madang Province project sites.

**In Texas/Gulf of Mexico:** Buchanan's Native Plants of Houston, Tim Diggs, Darrin Dukes, Natalie Hall, Rod and Sharla Knoll, Susan Lewis, Christine Peterson, Mareena Rew, Kailey Rippen, Erica Tilbury, Charlee Wiggs.

**GotMercury.org thanks all our dedicated volunteers who are monitoring nearly 400 supermarkets and restaurants for compliance with Proposition 65, California's right-to-know law:** Kieran Alcumbrac, Mary Allen, Karen Barcellos, Mel Baron, Sophia Bickford, Kay Bushnell, Shannon Catt, Barbara Champion, Lillian Chen, Christian, Monic Coates, Anthony Copioli, Vince J. Cukrov, Jeffrey Dickemann, Dijj, Monica DuClaud, Vivian Estrada, Alice Ford-Sala, Amber Gill, Andrea Forcina, Jacquelyn Griffith, Elizabeth Kane, Susan Lynn, Carol Lowe, Christy Mahaffey, Karen Malleyk, Kristina Miller, Charlene Modena, Frederick Muluh, Jim Olsen, Megan Pierson, McCaulie Reich, Ann Marie Remillard, Deborah Santone, Lucia Sayre, Julie Schmitz, Carole Shelton, Shanee Stopnitzky, Eugene Tarigan, Gloria Van Santen, Alaya Vautier, Denise Wyborski.

**Other Pro Bono Partners:** Brendan Cummings (Center for Biological Diversity), Susan Dembowski, Mitch Todd (Keller Williams), Katie Nash Design.

## A Legacy of Ocean Life

**Through a gift to the Sea Turtle Restoration Project in their will or other estate plans, people who care about sea turtles and the oceans can make a significant contribution to their future. By planning a gift to STRP - through your will, living trust or other estate plan - you will help protect sea turtles and their precious ocean home in perpetuity.**

**By planning a gift to STRP - through your will, living trust or other estate gift - you will help protect precious ocean life.**

**We encourage you to speak to** a professional estate planning advisor who is experienced in the establishment of charitable gifts. Your advisor will be able to help you identify ways to structure your estate plans that may provide tax benefits, as well as help protect the earth's oceans and wildlife.

**We are offering a free Estate Planning Kit** to interested STRP members. We can also send you bequest language to include in your will. Please email Managing Director Erica Heimberg at [erica@tirn.net](mailto:erica@tirn.net) or call 1-800-859-SAVE for any of this educational materials or to discuss your plans. All information discussed is completely confidential.

## Meet STRP's Sea Turtle Campaigner: Karen Steele

**KAREN IS DEEPLY PASSIONATE** about animal rights and protecting the marine environment. Prior to joining STRP, she worked on animal rights campaigns in Northern California and has been an environmental educator and outdoor leader. In encounters with sea turtles while free-diving, she was awed by their beauty and grace in their ocean environment.

**KAREN FEELS HER MOST IMPORTANT** achievement in her short tenure at STRP is helping keep the Leatherback Conservation Area off the US west coast closed to drift gillnet fishing during the 2006 migrating season, which directly saved the lives of sea turtles and other endangered marine creatures.

**KAREN'S MISSION** is to help people understand our relationship to the oceans and to encourage more people to become involved in marine stewardship. "There needs to be a fundamental change in the way we view the oceans," she says. "We've treated them as an unlimited resource, but they're not. All the amazing creatures that live there must be protected from over-exploitation."

**A NATIVE OF PERTH,** Western Australia, Karen's other passion is the outdoors and especially being at sea. A skilled sailor and kayaker, once while helping captain a sailboat across the South Pacific she had an unexpected encounter with a longline fishing vessel in the middle of the night. A last minute change of course prevented their vessel from becoming entangled in the line by just a few feet. She is currently working towards her Masters of Humanities and Leadership with an emphasis on Activism and Social Change.

**CONTACT KAREN** on 415-488-0370 ext. 106 or [Karen@seaturtles.org](mailto:Karen@seaturtles.org)



Karen and her dog Aussie.

## STRP Supporter Makes A Difference: MELVYN HUOK

**Melvyn Hurok, 68, of Montclair, California, recently made his 100th donation to the Sea Turtle Restoration Project - the first member ever to do so!**

Melvyn has been a member of STRP since 2002. He loves all animals, wild and domestic, and is inspired by their intelligence. "Animals are smarter than people! They have a way of knowing what you are thinking...and they give unconditional love."

As a child Melvyn kept turtles and fish as pets, and currently lives with two cats. He donates to numerous organizations that share his passion and that work to protect animals and wild habitat. He is very concerned about how human activity has encroached on animal habitat, and wonders what will be left for wildlife if we humans do not learn to live more harmoniously on the earth and use its resources more wisely.

A retired peace officer, and though coping with health challenges of his own, Melvyn finds time to campaign on health issues and is active in his community, including his local neighborhood watch group.

Melvyn, we salute you!

STRP COULD NOT CARRY ON ITS WORK without our many dedicated and inspiring many members and supporters and we love sharing stories about you.

**HOW CAN YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE?** There are many ways - learn more about sea turtles, donate, make small changes in your personal lifestyle, get actively involved, have a fun fundraising party or event, spread the word about our work.

To learn how you can get more involved in our work, please contact: Carrie Singer at 415-488-0370 or [info@seaturtles.org](mailto:info@seaturtles.org)

## BE ONE OF OUR SEA TURTLE STARS!

**By making a simple, affordable donation each month, our STARS members provide critical support so that STRP can take swift, sustained and innovative action to help sea turtles.**

**Why are STARS members so important?** STARS members enable us to act quickly when we learn of threats like the sea turtle poaching crisis in Nicaragua that we worked with a coalition to stop. STARS members support ongoing efforts that require steady resources like community nesting beach protection in Costa Rica, volunteer monitoring to help safeguard Kemp's Ridley's returning to nest on Texas shores, and nationwide screenings of our documentary Last Journey for the Leatherback? STARS members make possible special investigations through "Freedom of Information Act" Requests about threats to sea turtles to the government or by sending a brave activist with a camera onto fishing boats to document sea turtle threats.

**So how can you become one of our STARS?** Joining is simple – call us at 1-800-859-SAVE or email [info@seaturtles.org](mailto:info@seaturtles.org). We will walk you through three simple steps to begin making a monthly gift of \$5 or more using your credit card or an electronic funds transfer through your bank. You can change your gift amount or end your participation at any time.

We hope you'll be one of our STARS!

## Donate Your Vehicle to Help Sea Turtles!

**Do you have a vehicle that you plan to sell or are no longer using? If so, consider donating your extra vehicle through STRP's new Vehicle Donation Program.**

**Donating your vehicle to STRP is now simple and convenient. Through this nationwide program, you can avoid the difficulties of selling a used vehicle - and benefit sea turtles as the same time. Most donations are eligible for a tax deduction.**

**To arrange a pickup nationwide, or learn more, call 866-392-4483 toll free.**

## Thank You!

### Financial Contributions

*We thank these individuals, foundations and businesses who have given gifts of \$500 or more since April 2006:* Winifred and Harry B. Allen Foundation, Carol Allen, Paul and Wendy Amato, Elinor Patterson Baker Trust Fund, Brownington Foundation, James Kimo Campbell, Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment, Chrysalis Foundation, Mary Anne Compton, Nathan Cummings Foundation, Drive Savers Data Recovery, Peter T. Fredericks Fund, Firedoll Foundation, Brenda and Joel Fugazzotto, Furthur Foundation, Lisa and Douglas Goldman Fund, Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, Mr. Gordon Gibson, Andrew Guthrie, Dr. Bernard Harris Jr, Harris Family Foundation, John and Ruth Harris, Hunter and Teresa Harrison, Creighton Helms, Jacob and Terese Hershey Foundation, Margaret Hough, Houston Endowment, Juan Loaiza and Donna Howe, Micah and Erica Jacobs, Joanna Foundation, Johnson and Johnson Services Inc, Jones-Smith Foundation, Harris and Eliza Kempner Foundation, Forrest and Frances Lattner Foundation, Estate of Mildred Lillis, Amy Lyons, Timon and Lori Malloy, Marisla Foundation, Meadows Foundation, Dick and Laurie Morrison, Cathe and Jay Morrow, On Shore Foundation, Patagonia, Pamela Pearson, Holiday Phelan-Johnson and Christopher Johnson, Public Health Trust, Joseph Rosen Foundation, Lillian and Paul Sakmar, Susan Sakmar & Kirk Hobbs, Sandler Family Supporting Foundation, Mr. Kurt Scheidt, Jeff and Sara Schottenstein, Debbie Sivas, Snorkel Bob Foundation, Greg Sparks, Spector and Lipson Charitable Gift Account, Todd Steiner and Lynette McLamb, Robert and Patricia Switzer Foundation, Trull Foundation, Turtle Mountain Inc, Annette Varady, Robin Watson, Working Assets Funding Service, Charlotte Zimmerman.



Photo © DAVID PALANCE

# ACTION ALERT

## URGE COSTA RICAN PRESIDENT OSCAR ARIAS SANCHEZ TO PROTECT NESTING BEACH HABITAT NOW!

Costa Rica is bowing to pressure tactics by foreign developers who want to build tourist hotels on lands that are legally included in Las Baulas National Marine Park. Help us urge him to annex these lands into the park now, and protect leatherback hatchlings at Playa Grande.

### PERSONALIZED LETTERS HAVE THE GREATEST IMPACT. SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

Dr. Oscar Arias Sanchez,  
President of the Republic of Costa Rica,  
Presidential House,  
San Jose, Costa Rica,  
Fax 011-506-253-9078,  
e-mail: msolera@casapres.go.cr

### SAMPLE LETTER

*Dear President Arias Sanchez,*

*I am extremely concerned about the fate of Las Baulas National Marine Park, the most important nesting habitat in the western hemisphere for the critically endangered Pacific leatherback sea turtles. Please act now to annex the private lands included in the original National Park boundaries and protect leatherback hatchlings from the development threats. I urge you to proceed with this process immediately.*

Or visit [www.SeaTurtles.Org](http://www.SeaTurtles.Org) to automatically send an email message to President Arias Sanchez. Become an Action Alert member to get simple, turtle-saving things to do sent to you by email!



Please ask

Costa Rica

to protect

leatherback

hatchlings

and

national

parklands

NOW!

## ABOUT THE SEA TURTLE RESTORATION PROJECT

*The Sea Turtle Restoration Project is a project of Turtle Island Restoration Network, a nonprofit organization. The STRP works to protect sea turtle populations in ways that meet the ecological needs of the sea turtles and the needs of the local communities who share the beaches and waters with these endangered species.*

*We use a multi-faceted approach, which includes grassroots action, multi-media campaigns, hands-on conservation projects, environmental action and litigation. We rely on tax-deductible donations from individuals, private foundations, and progressive companies, as well as pro bono services of numerous supporters. We are grateful for our contributors' help and support, and welcome your input and assistance.*

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## ¡Viva La Tortuga!

Issue No. 1, 2007

Newsletter of the

Sea Turtle Restoration Project

TURTLE ISLAND RESTORATION NETWORK

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