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Turtle Care

AT SHANGRI-LA BARR AL JISSAH RESORT & SPA



Shangri-La

منتجع بر الجصة، سلطنة عمان
Barr Al Jissah Resort & Spa
SULTANATE OF OMAN

P.O. Box 644, Muscat 100, Sultanate of Oman Tel: (968) 24 776 666 Fax: (968) 24 776 677
Email: slmu@shangri-la.com Website: www.shangri-la.com/muscat

sanctuary
Shangri-La Turtle Care Project

Oman's Sea Turtles

There are seven species of sea turtles in the world today, and six are in danger of extinction. All over the world, historical nesting beaches are being encroached upon, leading to fewer nests and fewer eggs laid. Fortunately, many countries, like Oman, are doing their best to protect sea turtles and ensure that they continue to live for future generations. Oman is one of the world's most important areas for sea turtles as five species visit the waters of Oman, and four of these nest on its beaches throughout the year.

At Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah Resort & Spa, Sultanate of Oman, we are privileged to have two species regularly nest on our beaches; the endangered Green Turtle and our most frequent visitor, the critically endangered Hawksbill Turtle.

The period between January to August is the main turtle season. In 2013, 109 turtles laid 6,266 eggs on our beaches while in 2014, there was a total of 129 turtles producing 6,707 hatchlings. In 2015, 100 nests produced 3,841 hatchlings, although 30 of these nests were destroyed by a storm. Last year in 2016 we had 92 nests producing 4,146 hatchlings. The record in 2011 is the highest with a total of 146 turtles nesting on the resort's beaches, producing 10,174 hatchlings.

The resort's dedicated Turtle Ranger, Mohammed Al Hassani, grew up in Qantab – a small fishing village just along the coast from our resort. He has been taking care of turtles for many years and now patrols our beaches at night to ensure that mother turtles are able to nest in peace and their hatchlings make it to the sea.



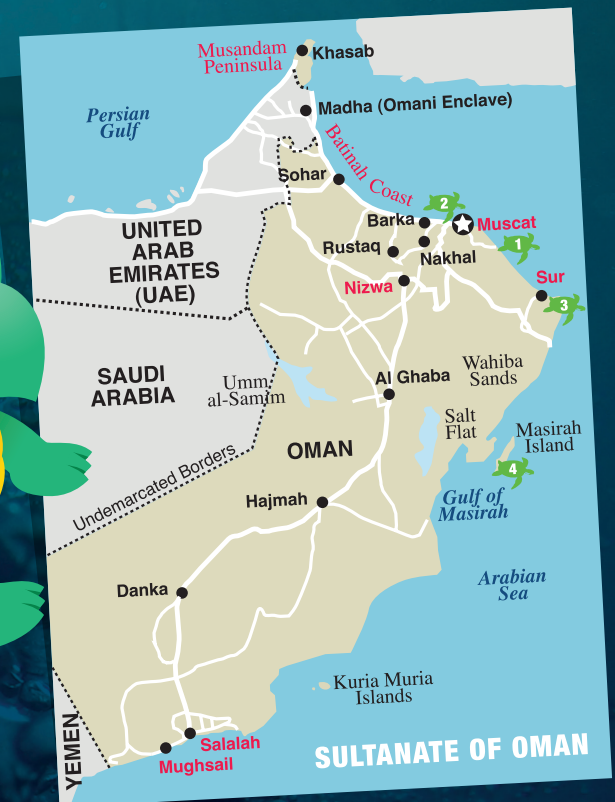
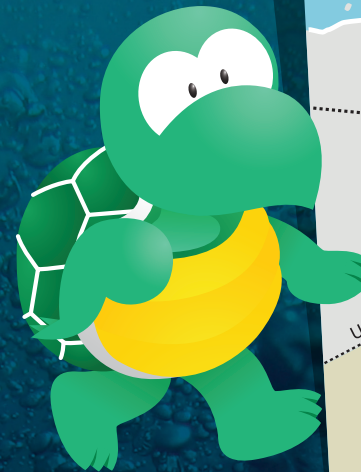
Mohammed Al Hassani
Turtle Ranger



Please visit our Eco Centre located on the first floor of Al Bandar Hotel (above Mokha Café) where you can meet our Turtle Ranger and join his daily 'Turtle Talk' session at 5 pm. The Eco Centre is open daily from 10 am to 6 pm. For more information, please call 6825. We can let you know when any turtle activity is taking place as well, please contact the Guest Information Centre by dialing 6789. Be warned though – turtles prefer the dark and keep very unsociable hours.

Oman's Nesting Sites

- 1 Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah Resort & Spa**
Hawksbill and Green Turtles
- 2 Daymaniyat Islands**
Hawksbill Turtles
- 3 Ras Al Hadd**
Green Turtles
- 4 Masirah Island**
Loggerhead Turtles



Turtle Tracks

Many guests ask us how we know that a turtle has made a nest on the resort's beaches.

Well, first of all, our turtle ranger may have spotted the nesting turtle and some guests may have had a chance to witness the nesting process. If not, there are obvious signs to be seen on the beaches in the morning.

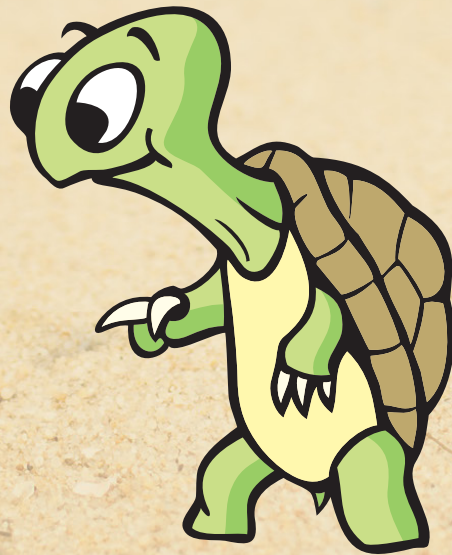
As you have already learned, we have two species of sea turtles on our beaches – the Hawksbill and the Green Turtle. Each leaves different looking tracks.



The Hawksbill Turtle is the only species that exhibits alternate flipper movement, therefore the tracks show alternate flipper markings.



The Green Turtle moves its front flippers at the same time, therefore these tracks show the even flipper markings.



Turtle Watching Guidelines

Turtle watching is an educational and emotive experience that you will never forget. By approaching the turtle watching experience with compassion and respect, you can make sure that you do not unintentionally become a part of the problem facing these ancient species.

Turtle Friendly Tips

Light and activity can deter turtles from emerging on to the beach or scare them off the beach before nesting. Keep noise and movement to a minimum and you will be much more likely to see a turtle.

- Do not use flashlights on nesting beaches at night.
- Do not smoke while there are turtles on the beach.
- Do not touch, ride or harass nesting turtles or hatchlings.
- Do not litter.

Turtle Encounter Guidelines

As soon as a turtle has been sighted, our turtle ranger will monitor its progress on the beach. Only when the turtle has settled and is starting to lay eggs will the ranger invite guests to watch the process. If you get the call, make your way to the appropriate beach. There is no need to rush, as it may take up to one hour to complete the laying and covering of the eggs.

Photography

Not to disturb the nesting turtles, we ask that there should be no flash photography, as this can blind and disorient turtles and complicate their return to the sea. Infrared and low light video recording are acceptable.

Hatchlings

Be very careful where you put your feet when there are hatchlings on the beach, as they are difficult to see at night and they can be easily crushed.

Do not touch or disturb emerging hatchlings, as they must orient themselves to their environment by crossing the beach.

Thank you for your co-operation and enjoy your turtle experience.



Top 10 Turtle Facts

- 1** How many eggs per nest?
Average 120.
- 2** What types of turtles do we have?
2 types - the Hawksbill and Green Turtles.
- 3** How long is the incubation period for the nests?
2 months.
- 4** Does the climate affect the turtle eggs?
Yes - in hot weather the hatchlings tend to be more female and in cold weather more males hatch.
- 5** What do turtles eat?
Soft corals, jellyfish and small fish such as plankton.
- 6** How long can turtles live for?
Up to 250 years.
- 7** How old before they start to nest?
From 20 years and stop nesting at 80 years.
- 8** Can you hold the hatchlings?
Do not touch the hatchlings!
- 9** Do they always nest at the same place?
Yes, the females will always return to the beach they were born on to lay their eggs.
- 10** What is the average size of a fully grown turtle?
1.5 metres (5 ft).

Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah Resort & Spa, Sultanate of Oman supports the efforts of Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts to offer the luxury that guests deserve without compromising the earth's natural resources.

Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts remain committed to serve as good stewards of the environment, ensuring that every property built respects local traditions and culture, restores natural habitats, conserves biodiversity and manages waste, water and energy. Under the umbrella of sustainability, Shangri-La's social responsibility programme consists of the two elements of "embrace" and "sanctuary."

The resort's turtle care initiative is under the sanctuary programme. The initiative focuses on Shangri-La's Care for Nature Project which promotes the conservation and restoration of biodiversity.