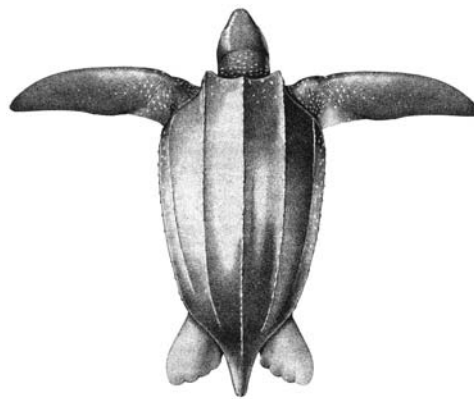




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UK & Republic of Ireland Marine Turtle Strandings & Sightings Annual Report 2006

R.S.Penrose & L.R.Gander. January 2007



Marine Environmental Monitoring
Penwalk
Llechryd
Cardigan
Ceredigion
West Wales
SA43 2PS
e-mail: rodpenrose@strandings.demon.co.uk

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1. SUMMARY

Information was gathered throughout 2006. Turtles were reported in all months of the year except May. A total of 66 turtles were reported either as sightings (46) or strandings (20) during the year comprising 47 leatherback turtles, 8 loggerhead turtles, and 11 unidentified turtles. All were single animal reports except for a group of two leatherback turtles seen together off Waterford, Republic of Ireland in July. Two leatherback turtles and one unidentified turtle were reported from seismic survey ships in the North Sea.

Live turtles

31 leatherback turtles, 4 loggerhead turtles, and 11 unidentified turtles were reported alive.

The geographical distribution of the 46 live animals is as follows -
13 Republic of Ireland, 8 Scotland, 17 England, 7 Wales.

All were sightings at sea, except for two stranded loggerheads.

One reported in December in Wales was an adult, recovered by Marine Environmental Monitoring and taken to the Weymouth Sea Life Centre for rehabilitation. The second, also reported in December, was a small juvenile loggerhead found in Argyll and taken to the Scottish Sea life Sanctuary, in Oban for rehabilitation.

Dead turtles

16 leatherback turtles, and 4 loggerhead turtles, were reported as dead.

The geographical distribution of the 20 dead animals is as follows -
8 Republic of Ireland, 3 Scotland, 8 England, 1 Wales.

Of the 20 reports of dead animals 17 were strandings and 3 were sightings.

16 reports were of dead leatherbacks. One of them was found dead entangled in a lobster pot rope off Co. Mayo, 2 were floating at sea in good condition and 13 were washed up, mostly badly decomposed. Four reports were of dead loggerheads all in good condition. These were all recovered for *post-mortem* examination.

Updated turtles

T1977/02 a leatherback turtle from North Wales on loan from Cardiff National Museum had been relocated frozen in Plymouth. The turtle was retrieved by Marine Environmental Monitoring and delivered to Bristol University Veterinary School where an autopsy was carried out in conjunction with a BBC-TV programme.

T2004/07 the loggerhead turtle 'Myrtle' held at Weymouth was released in the Canaries.

Irish records

In excess of 1200 historical reports have been received from Gabriel King. These have not yet been fully entered into TURTLE. Current TURTLE total is 1852.

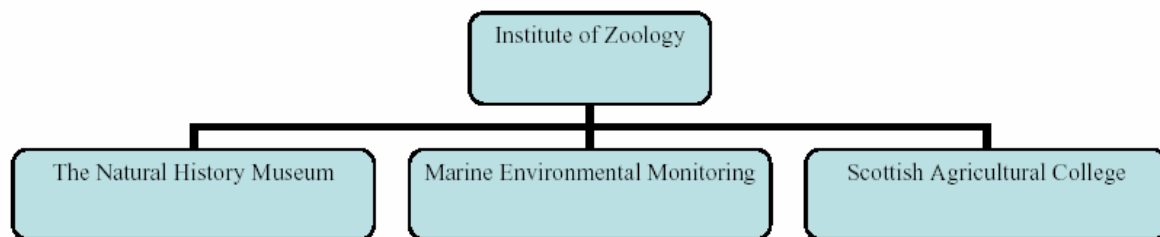
2. INTRODUCTION

In 1990, the ‘Collaborative UK Marine Mammal Strandings Project’ was initiated and part-funded by the UK Department of the Environment (now Defra). The project involves detailed pathological and other investigations of stranded marine mammal carcasses (mostly cetacean) from UK waters. It forms part of the Department's international obligations towards conservation agreements, including the ‘Agreement on the conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas’ (ASCOBANS).

2.1 Changes to Project 2006

Due to the end of the three year contract in 2005 coupled with departmental changes within Defra the ‘Collaborative UK Marine Mammal & Marine Turtle Strandings Project’ underwent a review by Watson & Crane Associates (full report can be viewed at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/resprog/findings/cetaceanstrand-review/cetaceanstrand-review.pdf>).

During this review process in 2006 a short twelve month contract was let by Defra until a decision could be taken on the future arrangements and funding of the Marine Mammal & Marine Turtle Strandings Project. This short term contract was issued to the Zoological Society of London/Institute of Zoology (ZSL/IoZ) as the lead agency together with the Natural History Museum (NHM) the Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) in Scotland and Marine Environmental Monitoring (MEM) in Wales.



Records of sightings and strandings of live and dead marine turtles are continued to be kept by the Welsh Strandings Co-ordinator within the “Collaborative UK Marine Mammal & Marine Turtle Strandings Project”. However, funding cuts by Defra over this period have resulted in changes in procedures. Fresh carcasses may not now be delivered immediately for *post-mortem* examination, but held frozen and transported when links become available or transported with other carcasses to conserve funds.

2.2 The UK Turtle Implementation Group.

In 1999, English Nature, now Natural England, published the UK Marine Turtles Grouped Species Action Plan (SAP) on behalf of the UK Biodiversity Group. The SAP is part of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and aims to enhance marine turtle conservation in UK waters and in the UK Overseas Territories as well as raise awareness and knowledge of their occurrence, legal protection and measures to enhance conservation amongst marine users and the general public. The SAP is being implemented by a group of organisations led by joint lead partners the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) and the Herpetological Conservation Trust (HCT). The contact agency is Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). The Turtle Implementation Group (TIG) consists of the following organisations:-

- **Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)** The Countryside Council for Wales is the statutory advisor to government on sustaining natural beauty, wildlife and the opportunity for outdoor enjoyment throughout Wales and its inshore waters. Contact: *Tom Stringell 01248 385780*
- **Environment and Heritage Service** is the agency responsible for the implementation of government environmental policy in Northern Ireland. Its aim is “to protect and conserve the natural and man-made environment and to promote its appreciation for the benefit of present and future generations”. Contact: *John Milburne 02890 546558*

- **Herpetological Conservation Trust** is an authority on reptile and amphibian issues and are Lead Partners or joint Lead Partners for all five of the reptile and amphibian Action Plans within the UK BAP. Contact: *Tony Gent 01202 391319*
- **Marine Conservation Society (MCS)** is the UK charity dedicated to the protection of the marine environment and its wildlife. MCS is joint Lead Partner of the Marine Turtles Grouped Species Action Plan and coordinates the TIG. Contact: *Sue Ranger or Peter Richardson 01989 566017 www.mcsuk.org*
- **Marine Environmental Monitoring (MEM)** is a member of the Defra “Collaborative UK Marine Mammal & Marine Turtle Strandings Project”, www.strandings.com. MEM also manages ‘TURTLE’ a UK & Republic of Ireland database holding both records of sightings and strandings of marine turtles dating back to 1748. Contact: *Rod Penrose (Reporting telephone No. 01348 875000)*
- **MEDASSET**, founded in 1988, is an international non-governmental organisation registered as a charity in the UK and as a non profit organisation in Greece, working for the conservation of sea turtles and their habitats throughout the Mediterranean. Its scientific and educational website www.euroturtle.org, was developed by Roger Poland, of Kings College, Taunton. Contact: *Lily Venizelos +30 210 3613572*
- **Natural England (NE)** is the Government agency that champions the conservation of wildlife and natural features throughout England. Contact: *Jim Foster 01733 455251*
- **Professor John Davenport** is Head of Department of Zoology & Animal Ecology at University College Cork. He has worked on most species of sea turtles since the early 1980s, conducting fundamental studies on their physiology and biomechanics. He is currently linked to turtle conservation programmes in Bermuda and Cephalonia. Contact: *+353 21 490 4051*
- **Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)** is a government body responsible to the Scottish Executive and Scottish Parliament. SNH promotes the care, improvement, responsible enjoyment, understanding, appreciation and sustainable use of Scotland’s natural heritage. SNH is the contact government point for the Marine Turtles Grouped Species Action Plan. Contact: *Dr Martin Gaywood 01463 725230*.
- **The Wildlife Trusts** is a partnership of 47 Wildlife Trusts, across the UK, caring for more than 2,400 nature reserves. It campaigns for the protection of wildlife and invests in the future by helping people of all ages to gain a greater appreciation and understanding of nature. [Colin Speedie] The Wildlife Trusts Basking Shark Project contributes at sea survey data, from the west coast of Britain on an annual basis. Contact: *Colin Speedie 07836 746197*
- **University of Exeter in Cornwall** hosts the Marine Turtle Research Group that carried out fundamental and applied research on marine turtles in British waters, the Mediterranean, West Africa and throughout the UK Overseas Territories. Staff edit the international Marine Turtle Newsletter www.seaturtle.org/mtn Contacts: *Dr Brendan Godley & Dr Annette Broderick 01326 371 861*
- **University of Wales, Swansea:** Prof. Graeme Hays and Dr Jonathan Houghton are currently coordinating an INTERREG project with Prof. John Davenport and Tom Doyle from the University College Cork, to investigate the ecological relationship between leatherbacks and jellyfish in the Irish Sea. Contact: *Dr John Houghton 01792 205678 ext 4614*.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Contact details vary for different parts of the UK and the Turtle Code should be consulted for the relevant contacts.

In **England & Wales** a 24 hour answer phone **01348 875000**, is interrogated at regular intervals. A message requests callers to leave details of the stranding or sighting and location, along with their name and contact phone number, so they may be reached if confirmation of details are required. (If the stranding is a live stranding a message on the answer phone informs the caller to contact the RSPCA immediately. see 2.1).

For **Scotland** all records should be reported to Scottish Natural Heritage on **01463 725230** with dead strandings being reported to the Scottish Agricultural College **01463 243030**. Live strandings and entanglements should be reported to the SSPCA on **0131 3390111**.

For **N.Ireland** all records should be reported to the Ulster Museum **02890 3831144** with ‘live/dead’ and entanglements to the Portrush Countryside Centre on **02870 823600**.

In the **Republic of Ireland** all records should be reported to Prof. John Davenport on **00353 (0)21 4904140** (work) and **00353 (0)21 4897392** (home).

UK turtle sightings and strandings can also be reported using the UK Turtle Code online at www.euroturtle.org/turtlecode

Sightings & strandings can be reported online in the Republic of Ireland at www.turtle.ie

The following criteria are applied: -

3.1 Live Animals

(Condition code 1)¹

In 1994 the Marine Animal Rescue Coalition (MARC) was formed. This consists of all the major animal welfare and conservation bodies involved with marine mammals in the UK. It has been agreed that in the case of a live stranding the first point of call would be the RSPCA (England & Wales), SSPCA (Scotland) as they support a manned 24-hour emergency phone. The RSPCA/SSPCA would then contact the relevant organisations, Marine Environmental Monitoring etc.

Contacts and advice can be found in the UK Turtle Code at www.strandings.com/Turtlepage.html

3.2 Dead Animals

(Condition code 2a extremely fresh as if just died)¹

(Condition code 2b slight decomposition)¹

Health and safety precautions are followed with the animal being handled only with gloved hands. Preferably it is then taken immediately for *post-mortem* examination, but due to funding cuts in 2006 freezing is now an option until transport becomes available. (see 2.1 Changes to Project 2006).

(Condition code 3 moderate decomposition)¹

Health and safety precautions are followed with the animal being handled only with gloved hands. Preferably it is then taken immediately for *post-mortem* examination, but due to funding cuts in 2006 freezing is now an option until transport becomes available. (see 2.1 Changes to Project 2006).

(Condition code 4 advanced decomposition)¹

(Condition code 5 mummified carcass)¹

Species identified, basic measurements taken together with skin for DNA. Health and safety precautions being observed. Local Authorities then contacted for safe disposal of remains.

All live and dead marine turtles are allocated a “T0000/01” number. “T” designates the animal as a marine turtle, 0000 is the year and /01 is an individual number for each record of the same year. Records of all strandings & sightings in the UK & Republic of Ireland are kept by the Strandings Co-ordinator. Copies of *post-mortem* examination reports are sent from the Strandings Co-ordinator to the finder and others associated with the relevant stranding.

¹ Body condition based on the Zoological Society of London condition code.

4. RESULTS

The following three tables include marine turtle 'sightings' and 'strandings' reported through 2006.

Table 1.

2006 Total number of reported marine turtles for UK & Eire (live & dead).													
Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Green turtle (<i>Chelonia mydas</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hawksbill turtle (<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kemp's ridley turtle (<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leatherback turtle (<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>)	1	0	1	1	0	4	8	12	6	8	2	4	47
Loggerhead turtle (<i>Caretta caretta</i>)	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	4	8
Unidentified	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	3	3	1	0	0	11
Total animals	2	1	1	1	1	4	12	15	9	9	3	8	66

Table 2.

2006 Number of live marine turtles.													
Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Green turtle (<i>Chelonia mydas</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hawksbill turtle (<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kemp's ridley turtle (<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leatherback turtle (<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>)	0	0	1	1	0	3	8	9	3	6	0	0	31
Loggerhead turtle (<i>Caretta caretta</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	4
Unidentified	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	3	3	1	0	0	11
Total animals	0	0	1	1	1	3	12	12	6	7	1	2	46

Table 3.

2006 Number of dead marine turtles.													
Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Green turtle (<i>Chelonia mydas</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hawksbill turtle (<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kemp's ridley turtle (<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leatherback turtle (<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>)	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	3	2	2	4	16
Loggerhead turtle (<i>Caretta caretta</i>)	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4
Unidentified	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total animals	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	3	3	2	2	6	20

The general geographical distribution of each species, strandings and sightings, are plotted on the following maps. Although the maps are generated directly from the data stored, they should be regarded as showing distribution of animals rather than giving absolute counts. While the co-ordinate system and the mapping software can theoretically differentiate between points as close as 1 metre apart, even with separations of 100 metres at the scale at which these maps are presented, some symbols may appear to overlap completely.

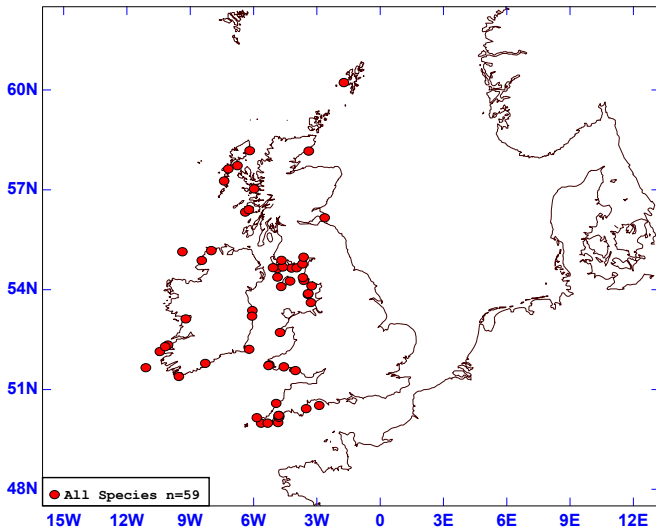


Figure 1. *All species sightings & strandings 2004.*

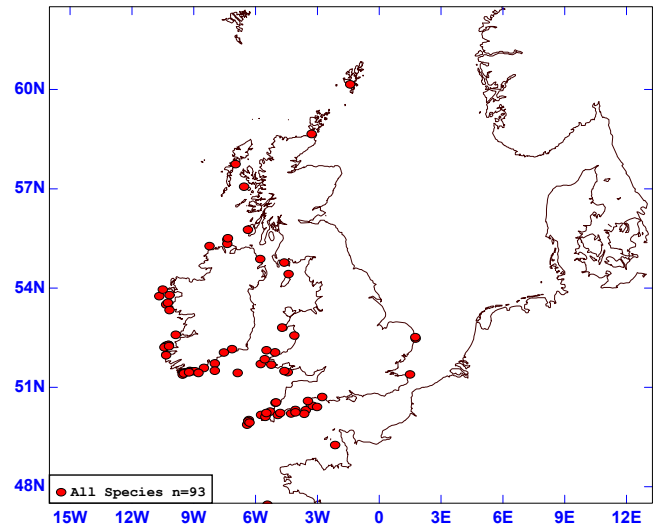


Figure 2. *All species sightings & strandings 2005.*

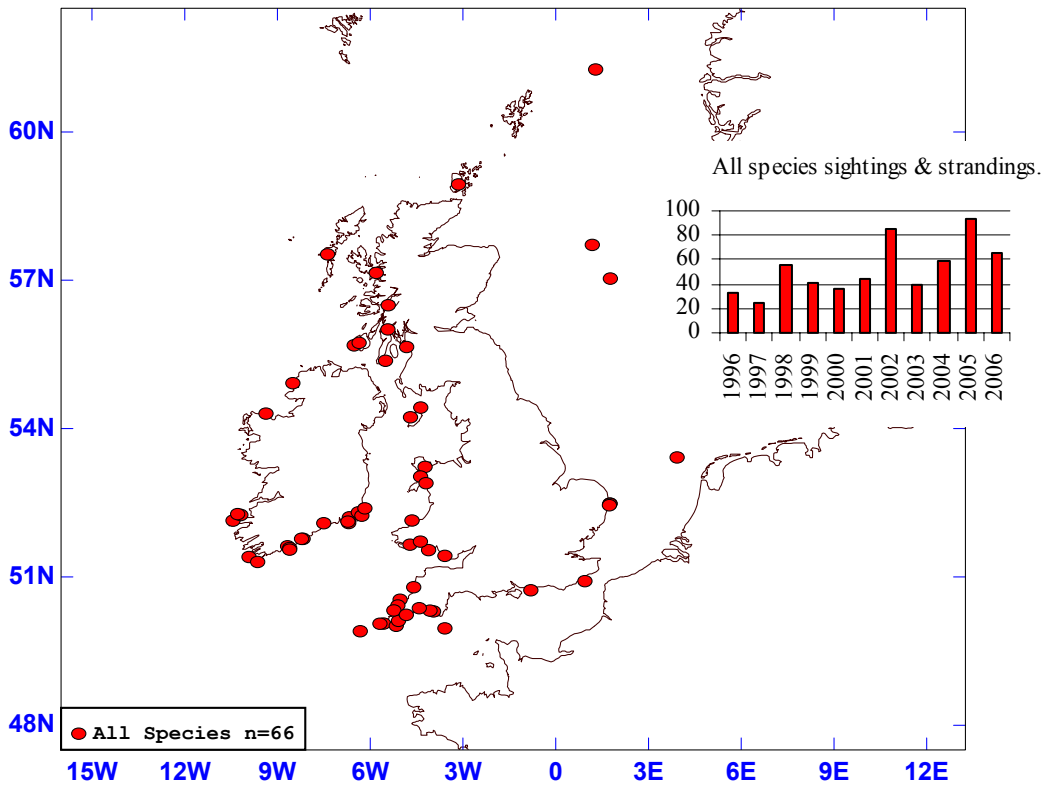


Figure 3. *All species sightings & strandings 2006.*

4.1 Sightings.

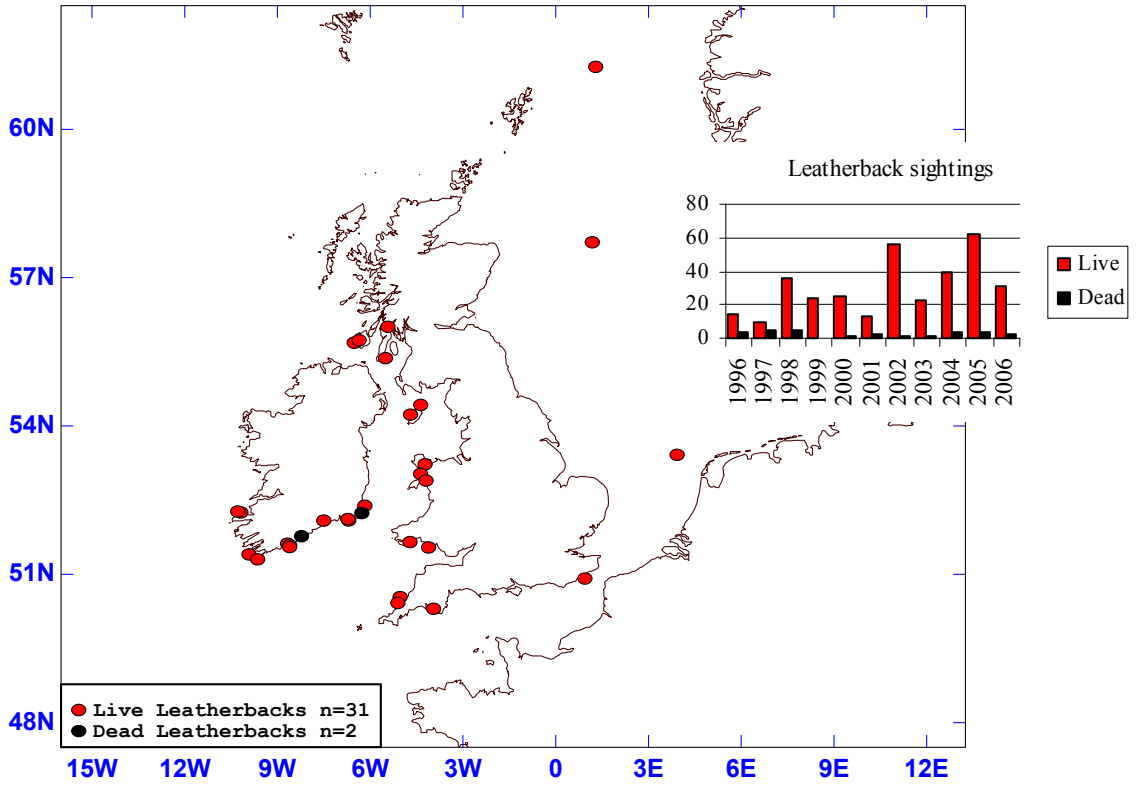


Figure 4. *Leatherback sightings 2006.*

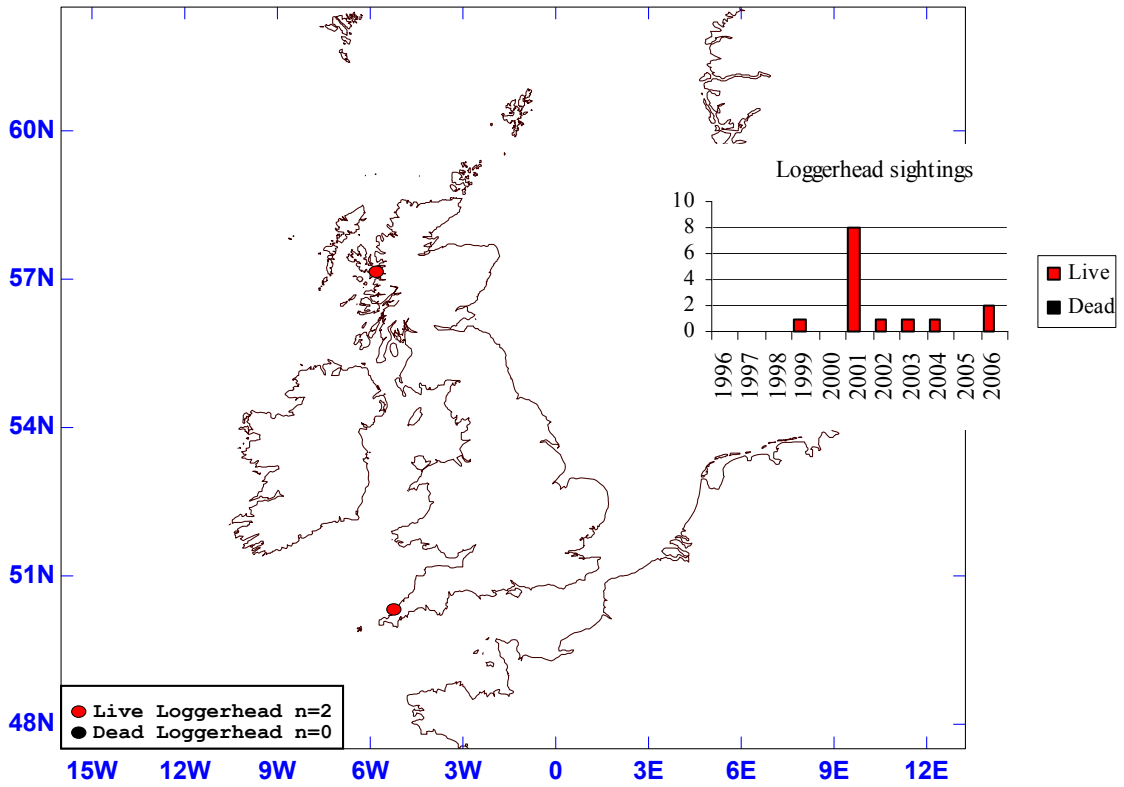


Figure 5. *Loggerhead sightings 2006.*

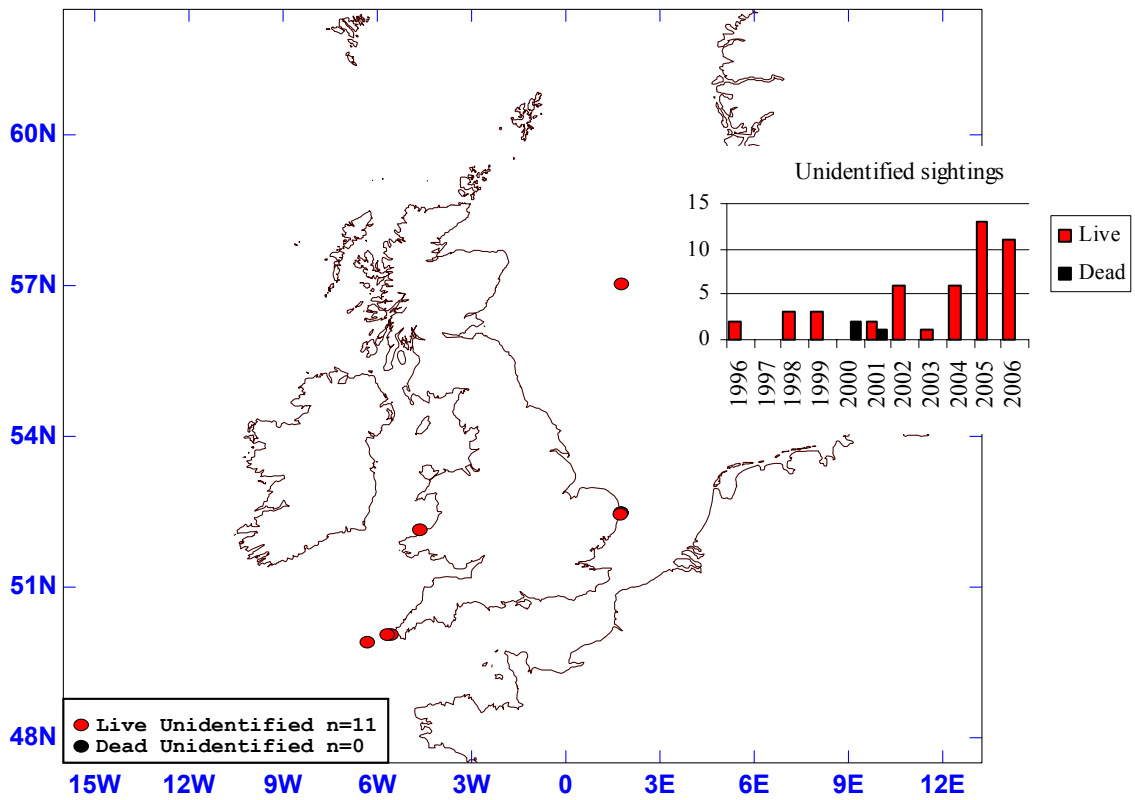


Figure 6. Unidentified sightings 2006.

4.2 Strandings.

No live or dead green turtles were reported during 2006. However, ‘strandings’ of both live and dead green turtles have been recorded in recent years as shown in **Figure 7**.

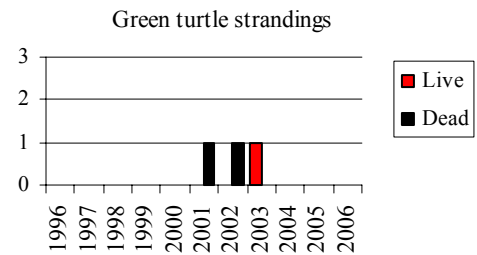


Figure 7. Green turtle strandings.

No live or dead Hawksbill turtle strandings were reported during 2006. There have been no records of Hawksbill turtle “strandings” in the database. One “sighting” record exists off Cork Harbour in 1983.

No live or dead Kemps ridley strandings were reported during 2006. However, ‘strandings’ of both live and dead Kemps ridley turtles have been recorded in recent years as shown in **Figure 8**.

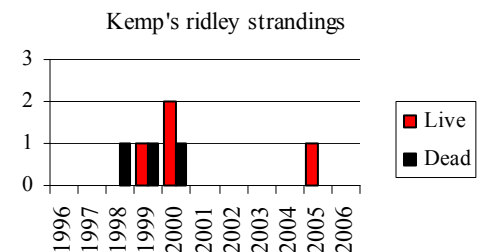


Figure 8. Kemp's ridley strandings .

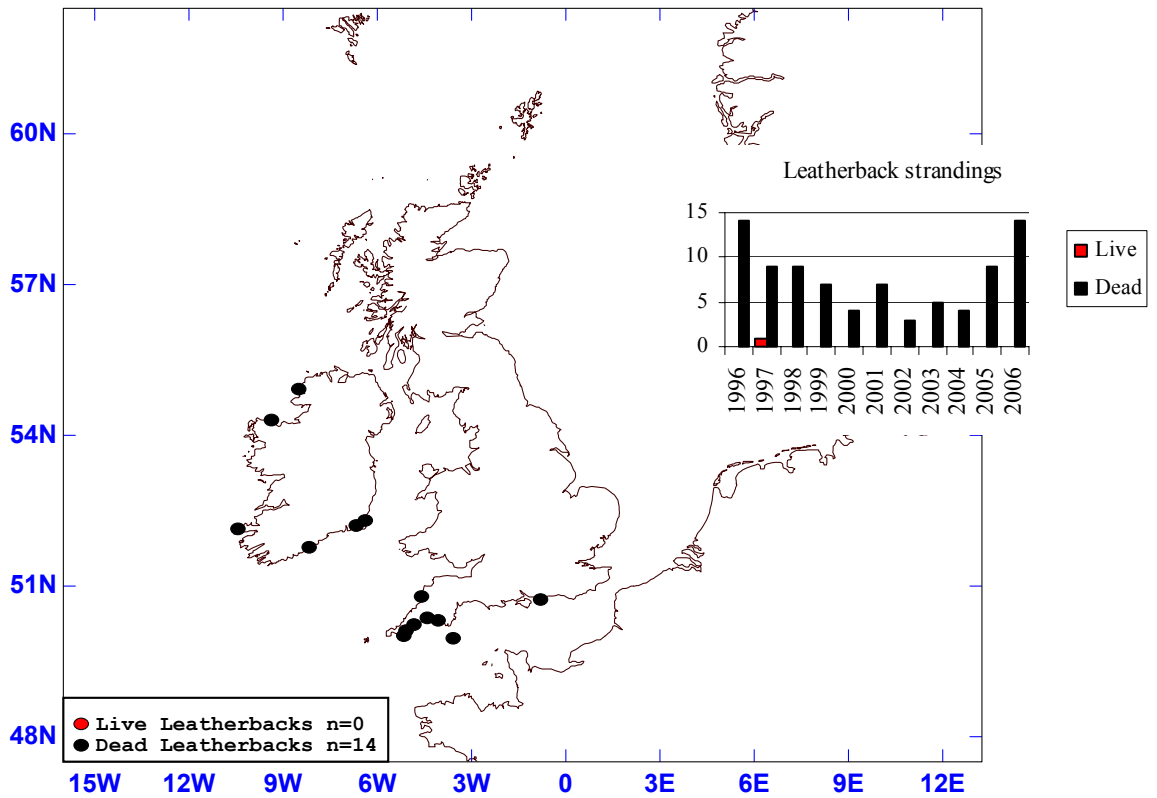


Figure 9. *Leatherback strandings 2006.*

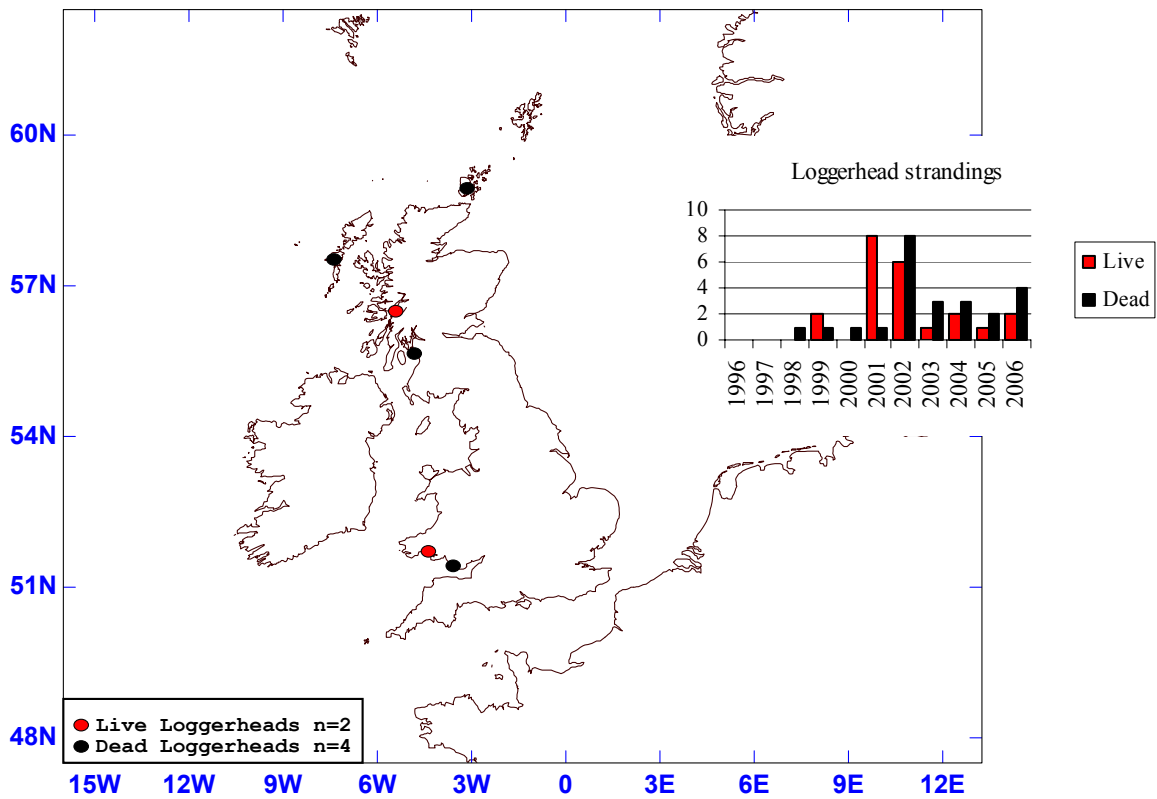


Figure 10. *Loggerhead strandings 2006.*

No unidentified strandings were reported during 2006. However, strandings of dead unidentified turtles have been recorded in recent years as shown in **Figure 11**.

Although numbers of leatherbacks recorded were not as high as 2005, June, July, August, September and October still showed numbers consistent with the average as shown in **Figure 13**. All leatherback strandings and sightings, both dead and alive have been plotted by month for the period 1996 to 2006 shown in **Figure 12**.

The average figure was taken over 1994-2006 and plotted in **Figure 13**. The graph clearly shows the increase in numbers through the summer months and gives a good indication on when to expect leatherbacks on the UK coast.

Unfortunately, the records for the hard-shell species are more sporadic. Of the hardshell species the most numerous recorded turtle is the loggerhead. The data for this species are plotted in **Figure 14** and **Figure 15**. It is interesting to note the number of live-stranded loggerheads turtles, found in the UK, that are either compromised by having a flipper missing or juvenile loggerheads having little body strength due to their size. This would appear to add weight to the theory that these turtles are swept from their home-range by strong currents with these disadvantaged animals unable to maintain headway against this force.

Unidentified strandings

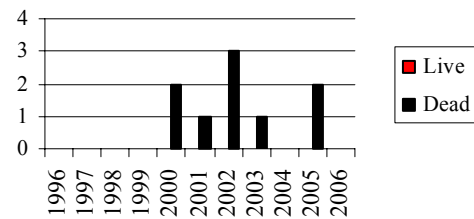


Figure 11. Unidentified strandings.

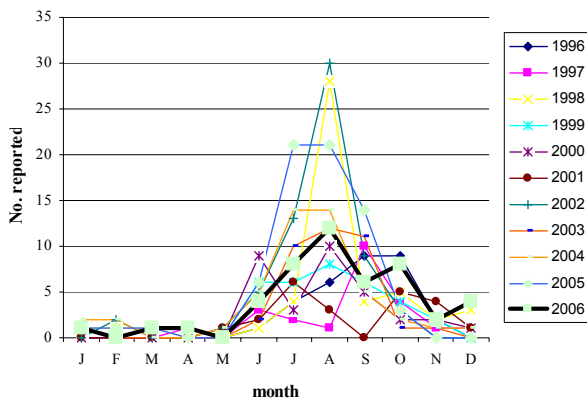


Figure 12. All leatherbacks by month.

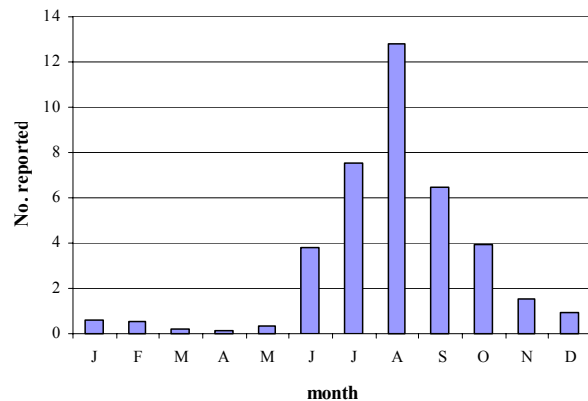


Figure 13. All leatherbacks average over 1994-2006

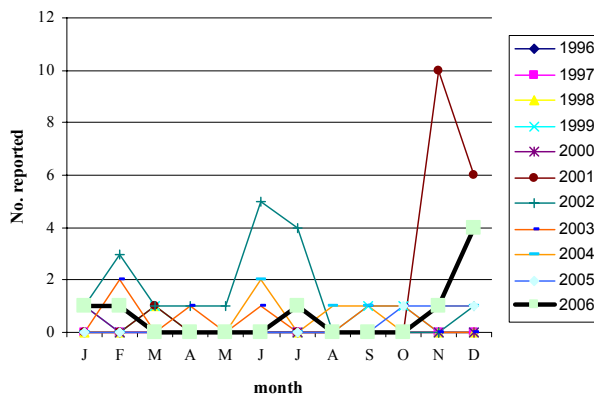


Figure 14. All loggerheads by month.

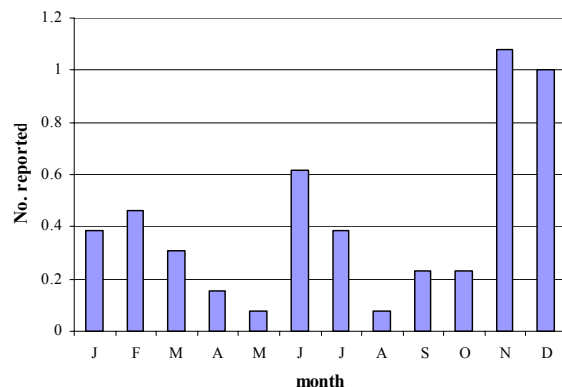


Figure 15. All loggerheads average over 1994-2006

Table 4.

Cumulative number of records.		
Country	All Species	
	2006	1748 - 2006
Rep. of Ireland	21	884
England	25	490
Scotland	12	308
Wales	8	146
Channel Islands	0	12
N. Ireland	0	7
Isle of Man	0	1
Misc. outside UK	0	4
Total	66	1852

An additional row has been added to **Table 4.** (Misc.outside UK), this includes three records from the Bay of Biscay and another sighted on passage to Iceland.

Countries are listed in **Table 4.** by descending order of total number of records shown in the year **1748 – 2006** column.

Table 5.

Species Comparison.												
Country	1986 - 1996											
	1996 - 2006											
	GT		HB		KR		LBT		LOG		UNI	
England	0	1	0	0	0	6	94	180	8	17	10	43
Scotland	0	2	0	0	0	0	56	93	6	27	15	10
Rep. of Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	293	185	16	18	8	4
Wales	0	0	0	0	0	2	26	70	3	4	7	6
Channel Islands	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
N. Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
Total	0	4	0	0	0	8	470	529	34	67	41	65

GT = Green turtle, HB = Hawksbill turtle, KR = Kemp's ridley turtle, LBT = Leatherback turtle, LOG = Loggerhead turtle, UNI = Unidentified turtle.

Table 6.

'TURTLE' Database Species Totals (1748 - 2006).	
Species	TOTAL
Green turtle (<i>Chelonia mydas</i>)	7
Hawksbill turtle (<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>)	1
Kemp's ridley turtle (<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>)	31
Leatherback turtle (<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>)	1427
Loggerhead turtle (<i>Caretta caretta</i>)	158
Unidentified	228
Total animals	1852

5. MATTERS ARISING.

During a routine Fisheries Inspection of a fish-store in Plymouth, Inspectors clambered over several tons of frozen fish to find a frozen adult leatherback turtle. The report was passed to Marine Environmental Monitoring so the turtle could be released and included in the Strandings Project. The turtle had been held frozen for so long nobody was really sure of its history, workers at the store told of how the turtle would occasionally reappear over the years as fish stocks were moved and they would bring their children in to view the animal. Eventually it was found the turtle to be **T1977/02** a leatherback turtle that stranded dead at Porth Ceiriad near Abersoch on the Lleyn Peninsular, north Wales on the 9th December 1977. The TURTLE database revealed the carcass was reported by Mr Ivor Rees and was then delivered to the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff where it was stored frozen. The animal was later loaned to the National Aquarium at Plymouth where it was intended to be an exhibit. Whilst decisions were being made on how best to prepare and preserve the specimen for exhibition, arrangements were made with a local fish-store to hold the carcass frozen until ready. The database indicated Mr Ivor Rees had photographs of the stranding, and remarkably, 29 years later, Ivor instantly produced the pictures. A comparison of the photographs with the stored animal revealed an injury to the head was present when it stranded and not an altercation with a fork-lift truck whilst in the fish-store. In conjunction with a BBC TV programme "Seawatch" the carcass was retrieved from the fish-store by MEM and delivered to the Bristol University Veterinary School at Langford for autopsy. The cause of death was thought to be a boat collision with possible prop marks to the head, no plastics were found in the stomach.



Plate 1. *T1977/02 recovered near Abersoch, December 1977.*



Plate 2. *T1977/02 emerging from fish-store in Plymouth 2006.*



Plate 3. *Injury to head was shown to be there in 1977.*

5.1 Retrospective Reports.

In excess of 1200 reports ranging from years 1970 to 2004 have been received from Gabriel King in the Republic of Ireland during 2005. When finally added these records will nearly double the current total held in TURTLE. Additional funding has not been forthcoming to enable these records to be added to the database although some records have been added as shown in **Table 4**, raising the total for the Republic of Ireland to 884 from 570. It is hoped that funding will be secured during 2007 to enable these records to be fully entered into the database.

It is understood that these records will be published in a dedicated forthcoming issue of the Irish Naturalist Journal by King G.L. & Berrow S.D. and we are extremely grateful to Gabriel King for releasing these records to TURTLE.

Additional to this, a further survey by Gabriel King of Northern Ireland in 2006 has produced a further 68 records which need to be entered.

5.2 Repatriation.

T2004/07 a loggerhead turtle named ‘**Myrtle**’, found hauled out amongst sand dunes on North Uist, Western Isles, Scotland on the 15th June 2004, taken to Oban Sea Life Centre and later moved to Scarborough Sea Life Centre, has successfully been flown to Gran Canaria and released.

PIT tag number 95800000385561 was inserted in the turtles left shoulder prior to being prepared for transportation. The flight took place on the 24th April 2006 with three members of ‘Sea Life’ staff, one journalist, one photographer and two cameramen from ‘Wild Productions’ all in attendance.

Yet again we are extremely grateful to Gran Canaria state veterinarian Pascual Calabuig, ‘MyTravel Airways’, Cargo Manager Ben Sargeant and ‘Sea Life’ for enabling this repatriation.



Plate 4. *T2004/07* named ‘**Myrtle**’ being released at Gran Canaria by Sea Life staff Lyndsey Crawford and Jamie Dyer.

Photo by: Roy Kilcullen.

6. LIVE STRANDING EVENTS 2006.

There were three live-strandings of marine turtles reported in 2006.

T2006/11 was a loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*), seen close to the causeway to Oronsay, Isle of Skye, Scotland. The animal was thought to be in distress so was retrieved to the Oban Sea Life Centre. The turtle had the front left flipper missing but this was a healed wound indicating this to be an old injury.

T2006/39 was a loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*), found stranded on the 2nd December at Pembrey Country Park, Carmarthenshire, West Wales. The animal was missing most of its front left flipper and had repeatedly stranded over several days until finally retrieved by Park Ranger Wyn Parry. The turtle was collected by MEM and taken to the Turtle Rehabilitation Centre at Weymouth Sea Life on the 4th December.

T2006/43 was a juvenile loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*), found stranded on the 19th December at Ardmucknish Bay, north Argyll, Scotland. The juvenile was taken to the Scottish Sea Life Sanctuary, Oban. This animal is responding to treatment and it will also be moved to the Turtle Rehabilitation Centre at Weymouth Sea Life hopefully in February 2007.

6.1 Rehabilitation

All three live-strandings listed above had survived to be taken into care, at the time of writing all three appear to be doing well and are hoped to be candidates for eventual release.

T2006/11 a loggerhead turtle named ‘**Skye**’ was seen close to the causeway connecting Oransay to the main Island of Skye on the 20th July. It was thought the turtle was in distress and was retrieved to the Oban Sea Life Centre where it was found to be cold-stunned and under-nourished. The animal had its front left flipper missing which was an old injury. Once stabilised the turtle was moved to the new Rehabilitation Centre at Weymouth Sea Life.

T2006/39 a loggerhead turtle named ‘**Pembrey**’ was found on Cefn Sidan Sands, Pembrey Country Park, Carmarthenshire, West Wales on the 2nd of December during strong south-westerly storms.

This was a fairly large animal measuring 84cm straight overall length and weighing 36.5 kgs. Most of the front left flipper was missing (as shown in **Plate 6.**) but this was healed and obviously an old injury. Multiple goose barnacles (*Lepas anatifera*) were attached to the underside of the carapace at the rear (**Plate 7.**). The animal was extremely lethargic so a decision was taken to coat it in Vaseline, to prevent its skin from drying out whilst in dry transit, and drive it down to Weymouth Sea Life Centre to the new Rehabilitation Centre. On arrival an attempt was made to re-hydrate the animal by tube but what appeared to be compacted sand in the oesophagus prevented the tube from entering the stomach. The turtle was held in shallow water with the temperature being slowly raised at 1^o Celsius per day and eventually re-hydrated by a drip.

T2006/43 a loggerhead turtle named ‘**Holly**’ was found stranded on the 19th December at Ardmucknish Bay, north Argyll, Scotland. This was a small loggerhead turtle 25cm long overall, and weighing 1.09kg and taken to the Scottish Sea Life Sanctuary, Oban. Although

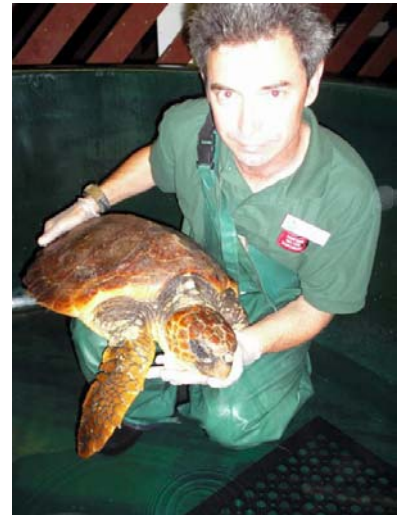


Plate 5. T2006/11 named ‘**Skye**’ with Jamie Dyer at Oban.



Plate 6. T2006/39 named ‘**Pembrey**’ about to be tube fed at Weymouth. Photo by: Lin Gander.



Plate 7. Goose barnacles (*Lepas anatifera*) attached to the rear of the turtle T2006/39. Photo by: Lin Gander.

this animal has a list to the left it is responding to treatment and it will also be moved to the Turtle Rehabilitation Centre at Weymouth Sea Life hopefully in February 2007. The turtle was in such good condition when found, it was initially thought by the staff at Oban the turtle may have been released locally possibly from a collection. Subsequent dead strandings around the same time period revealed similar age class/condition indicating this was most likely not a released animal.



Plate 8. T2006/43 named '**Holly**' at the Scottish Sea Life Sanctuary. Photo by: Scottish Sea Life Sanctuary

7. BYCATCH.

Five animals, all leatherbacks, were reported as by-caught during 2006, these are listed below.

T2006/32 Leatherback turtle found alive at sea entangled in creel rope on the 25th August, SE of Ardrishaig in the mouth of the Clyde. Released alive and swam off.

T2006/50 Leatherback turtle found dead at sea entangled in a lobster pot buoy rope on the 28th June off Downpatrick Head - east side, Ballycastel Pier, Co Mayo.

T2006/51 Leatherback turtle found alive at sea entangled in salmon drift nets on the 28th June off the Slate, near sauce Creek, Brandon Head, Co Kerry. Fitted with satellite tag by Tom Doyle and John Houghton. Released alive and well. (see **8. TAGGING.**)

T2006/60 Leatherback turtle found alive at sea entangled in lobster pot rope on the 5th August 0.25 miles NW of the Fastnet, Co Cork. Released alive and swam off.

T2006/63 Leatherback turtle found alive at sea entangled in lobster pot buoy rope on the 3rd October, 5-6 miles WSW off Kilmore Quay, Co Wexford. Released alive and swam off.

8. TAGGING.

T2006/51 Leatherback turtle found alive at sea entangled in salmon drift nets on the 28th June off the Slate, near Sauce Creek, Brandon Head, Co Kerry. The Swansea/Cork collaborative team of Tom Doyle and Jon Houghton fitted the male turtle with a Satellite Relay Data Logger (SRDL/manufactured by Sea Mammal Research Unit, St. Andrews). The turtle travelled south for a short period before spending ~76 days west of the Bay of Biscay. This area corresponded with a mesoscale feature evident from satellite imagery, with the implication that this turtle had found a rich feeding site. After a prolonged high latitude seasonal residence this turtle eventually headed south on 14th October 2006. The turtle has since swum past Madeira, the Canaries, Cape Verde, and is now heading southwest in the direction of south America and the wider Caribbean (end of Jan 2007) (see **Figure 16.**)

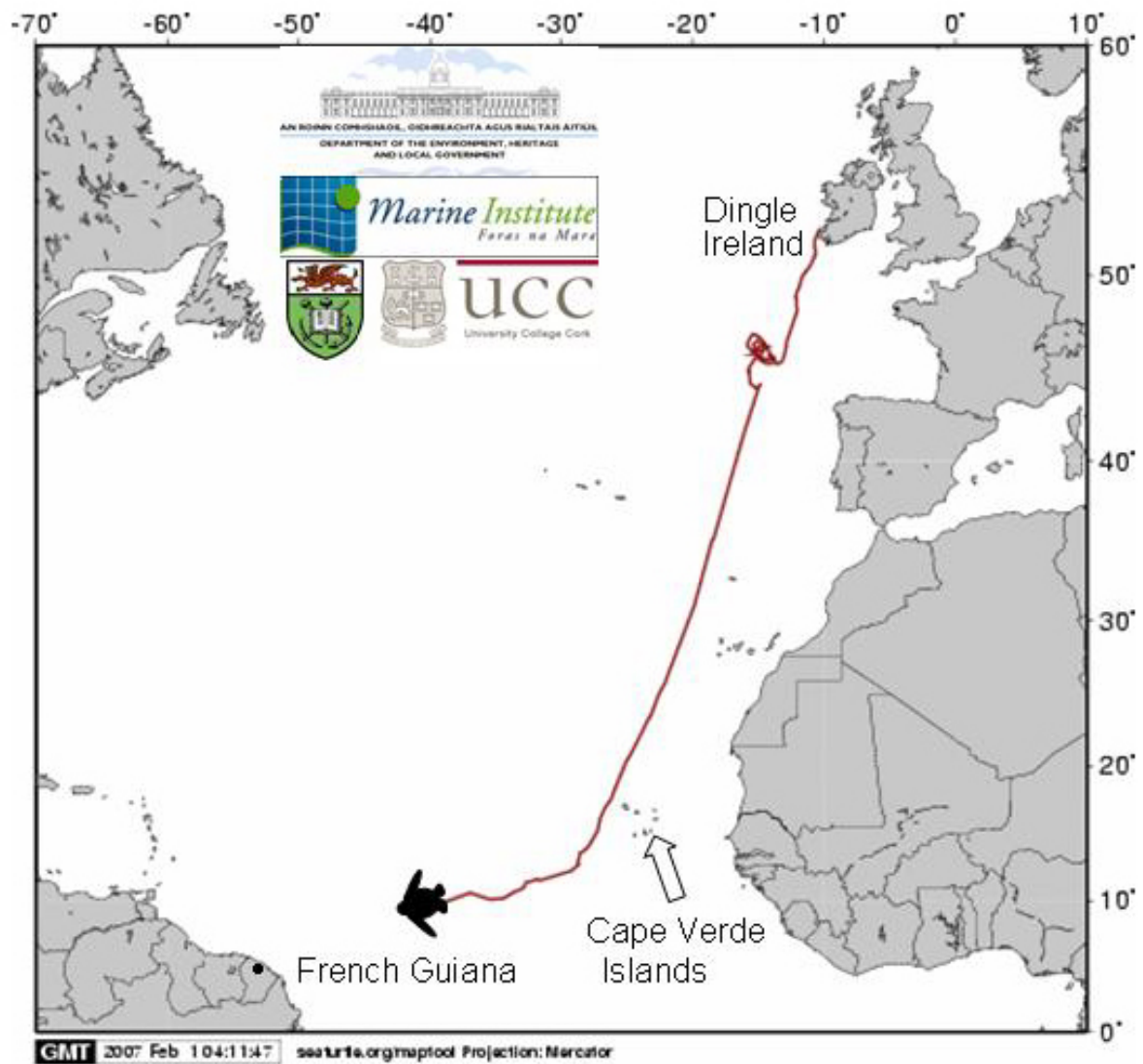


Figure 16. Satellite track of the leatherback turtle **T2006/51**. (dated end of January 2007).

This image was created using the Maptool program for analysis and graphics. Maptool is a product of SEATURTLE.ORG. (Information is available at www.seaturtle.org).

The track marked in red in **Figure 16**. shows the path taken by the male leatherback turtle **T2006/51** following being by-caught and subsequently satellite tagged off Dingle, Ireland in June 2006.

The turtle was tracked using the Argos system and funding for this research was received from the National Parks & Wildlife Service of the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government (Ireland) and the Marine Institute (Ireland).

We are grateful to Tom Doyle and Jon Houghton for this data, further information can be found at www.turtle.ie

9. SAMPLES.

The normal procedure for the taking of samples is from fresh animals that have been taken for *post-mortem* examination within the Collaborative UK or the Irish Strandings project.

Requests have been received from North Carolina, USA for humeri from dead loggerhead turtles that are found stranded on the UK coast. The study is to develop a means to age loggerhead turtles using growth layers in the humeri.

Requests have also been received from IATA-CNR, Italy for 1 to 2 grams of scute plus 2 to 3 marginal bones (where ribs are inserted) from dead loggerhead turtles for Carbon and Oxygen stable isotope determinations to learn more about the peculiarity/differences among populations. This is to compare non-Mediterranean animals to those within the Mediterranean.

Wherever possible the above samples have been collected and archived at MEM, Llechryd. The samples will be forwarded, once numbers have been collected, to both parties with the appropriate CITES agreements.

T2006/44 was a very small freshly dead loggerhead turtle found stranded near Southerndown/Nash Point, in the Vale of Glamorgan, south Wales on the 23rd December. It was retrieved, following strong south-westerly gales, and placed in a freezer by a member of the public. The carcass was collected by MEM and taken to the Zoological Society of London where a full *post-mortem* examination was carried out. Fragments of clear plastic were found in the stomach. **Plate 10.** shows the esophagus opened-up on the right, lined with papillae pointing back down towards the stomach on the left. Two fragments of plastic removed from the stomach are placed on the blue paper above. Cause of death was given as starvation/hypothermia



Plate 9. *T2006/44* awaiting post-mortem examination.



Plate 10. Fragments of plastic (on blue paper) removed from the stomach of *T2006/44*.

10. PUBLICITY.

The Strandings Web-site has been maintained to provide details of both the Collaborative UK & Celtic Strandings Projects. Although this is intended primarily for Wales, key contact details are given for England, Scotland and Ireland. The pages can be viewed at www.strandings.com/ and I would be grateful for any comments on the Web site and any further links to other sites that may be of interest.

The “TURTLE” database is now available on this site together with annual reports and other turtle related publications at www.strandings.com/Turtlepage.html
Posters and leaflets produced to increase awareness of the project have continued to be distributed.

Records are also posted on the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Gateway and these can be accessed at <http://www.searchnbn.net/>

Following the stranding of the loggerhead **T2006/39** at Pembrey during south-westerly storms, the BBC News Website was contacted and an article was placed asking the public to be aware and keep an eye open for stranded turtles.

11. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

Jemma and Ray Lerwill and Robin Pratt for providing support and base of operations at Fishguard.
Dr John Houghton and Tom Doyle, Interreg Irish Sea Turtle Survey for passing on turtle records.
Doug Herdson, Plymouth National Marine Aquarium.
Devon Biological Record Centre, Cornwall Wildlife Trust, Orkney Field Club, Shetland Biological Record Centre, Marine Conservation Society, MyTravel Airways and the Sea Life Centres.
Gabriel King for supplying data to the database, and Grand Canaria state Veterinarian Pascual Calabuig.

Marine Environmental Monitoring wishes to acknowledge the financial support of Scottish Natural Heritage, Natural England, and the Countryside Council for Wales.

12. APPENDICES.

Appendix 1. 2006 Turtle data.

RecordKey	Species	Group	Hardshell	SightStrand	AliveDead	Capture	GearCode	Anat_Tag	EndDate	Country	County	Location
T2006/01	LOG		Y	ST	DEAD				Saturday, January 14, 2006	SCOTLAND	ORKNEY	Nr Bu, Orphir
T2006/02	LOG			ST	DEAD				Tuesday, February 07, 2006	SCOTLAND	ISLES	Nth Uist, Baleshare, Isle of Lewis
T2006/03	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Tuesday, March 21, 2006	SCOTLAND	BUTE	Campbeltown
T2006/04	UNI		Y	SEA	ALIVE				Thursday, May 04, 2006	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	Nearest port - Lamorna Cove. Half mile off.
T2006/05	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Friday, April 21, 2006	SCOTLAND	Aberdeen	Offshore in North Sea
T2006/06	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Sunday, June 04, 2006	ENGLAND	DEVON	Devon (Bigbury Bay)
T2006/07	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Sunday, June 11, 2006	ENGLAND	Lincolnshire	North Sea
T2006/08	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Friday, July 14, 2006	WALES	ANGLESEY	400 yds from shore off Rhos Niger
T2006/09	UNI		Y	SEA	ALIVE				Thursday, July 20, 2006	ENGLAND	SUFFOLK	Lowerstoft north of harbour
T2006/10	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Wednesday, July 19, 2006	ENGLAND	KENT	power station
T2006/11	LOG			SEA	ALIVE				Thursday, July 20, 2006	SCOTLAND	HIGHLAND	Oronsay near causeway to mainland
T2006/12	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Wednesday, August 09, 2006	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	off Constantine Beach, nr Padstow
T2006/13	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Saturday, July 15, 2006	EIRE	CORK	25/30 feet off the point Courmacsherry, west Cork
T2006/14	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Thursday, August 17, 2006	WALES	SWANSEA	2 miles off Gower (south of three cliffs Bay) in the Seven
T2006/15	UNI		Y	SEA	ALIVE				Tuesday, August 15, 2006	ENGLAND	SUFFOLK	2006/09)
T2006/16	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Wednesday, August 16, 2006	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	Fistral beach, Newquay. 40m from shore
T2006/17	UNI			SEA	ALIVE				Monday, August 28, 2006	WALES	CEREDIGION	Mwnt
T2006/18	UNI			SEA	ALIVE				Monday, September 04, 2006	ENGLAND	SUFFOLK	Lowerstoft (south of)
T2006/19	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Friday, September 08, 2006	WALES	GWYNEDD	Clynnog beach. North coast of Llyn Peninsula.
T2006/20	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Wednesday, September 06, 2006	WALES	RE	between Caldy Island and Giltar Point
T2006/21	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Thursday, September 07, 2006	SCOTLAND	Shetland	Shetland.
T2006/22	UNI			SEA	ALIVE				Monday, July 31, 2006	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	70 miles SW Plymouth
T2006/23	UNI			SEA	ALIVE				Monday, July 31, 2006	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	70 miles SW Plymouth
T2006/24	UNI		Y	SEA	ALIVE				Thursday, August 03, 2006	ENGLAND	SCILLY ISLES	St Mary's sound
T2006/25	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Sunday, August 20, 2006	ENGLAND	ISLE OF MAN	Peel breakwater
T2006/26	UNI	1/2	Y	SEA	ALIVE				Friday, September 15, 2006	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	Porth Chapel, west of Porth Curno, St Levan
T2006/27	UNI	2/2	Y	SEA	ALIVE				Friday, September 15, 2006	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	Porth Chapel, west of Porth Curno
T2006/28	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Friday, July 14, 2006	ENGLAND	ISLE OF MAN	200m off Point of Ayre
T2006/29	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Wednesday, October 11, 2006	SCOTLAND	ISLES	Portnahaven Bay, Islay
T2006/30	LBT			ST	DEAD				Wednesday, September 27, 2006	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	Kennack Sands, Nr Kuggar
T2006/31	LBT			SEA	ALIVE					SCOTLAND	BUTE	Loch Indaal, Islay. 150 yds off Port Charlotte
T2006/32	LBT			SEA	ALIVE	ENT	11		Friday, August 25, 2006	SCOTLAND	BUTE	SE of Ardrishaig, end of Loch Gilp (mouth of the Clyde?)
T2006/33	UNI			SEA	ALIVE				Monday, October 02, 2006	SCOTLAND	Aberdeen	North Sea
T2006/34	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Friday, October 13, 2006	WALES	GWYNEDD	four miles out of Port Madoc from a yacht
T2006/35	LBT			ST	DEAD				Monday, October 16, 2006	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	Prisk Cove (Rosemullion) Falmouth Bay
T2006/36	LOG			SEA	ALIVE				Sunday, November 05, 2006	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	St Agnes Head - Chapel Porth
T2006/37	LBT			ST	DEAD				Thursday, November 16, 2006	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	Porthluney Cove, Caerhays
T2006/38	LBT			ST	DEAD				Sunday, November 19, 2006	ENGLAND	DEVON	Wembury, Plymouth
T2006/39	LOG			ST	ALIVE			Y	Saturday, December 02, 2006	WALES	SHIRE	Pembrey Country Park
T2006/40	LBT			ST	DEAD			Y	Tuesday, December 12, 2006	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	Blackrock, Widemouth Bay, Bude
T2006/41	LBT			ST	DEAD				Monday, December 18, 2006	ENGLAND	West Sussex	Selsey Bill
T2006/42	LBT			ST	DEAD			Y	Saturday, December 16, 2006	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	Kevalar Beach, 1 mile west of Seaton, near Looe
T2006/43	LOG			ST	ALIVE				Tuesday, December 19, 2006	SCOTLAND	BUTE	Ardmucknish Bay, nth Argyll
T2006/44	LOG			ST	DEAD				Saturday, December 23, 2006	WALES	GLAMORGAN	Southerndown/Nash Point
T2006/45	LBT			ST	DEAD				Thursday, October 05, 2006	EIRE	WEXFORD	Ballyteige Bay
T2006/46	LBT			ST	DEAD				Saturday, September 23, 2006	EIRE	WEXFORD	Ballytrent Beach, Rosslare
T2006/47	LBT			ST	DEAD				Tuesday, December 26, 2006	ENGLAND	SCILLY ISLES	Popplestone Neck, nr Gweal Hill, Bryher

RecordKey	Species	Group	Hardshell	SightStrand	AliveDead	Capture	GearCode	Anat_Tag	EndDate	Country	County	Location
T2006/48	LOG			ST	DEAD				Friday, December 29, 2006	SCOTLAND	AYRSHIRE	North Bay, Ardrossan, Strathclyde
T2006/49	LBT			ST	DEAD				Monday, January 02, 2006	EIRE	KERRY	washed up on Clogher Strand, Dingle,
T2006/50	LBT			SEA	DEAD	ENT	1.01		Wednesday, June 28, 2006	EIRE	MAYO	Off Downpatrick Head - east side, Ballycastel Pier
T2006/51	LBT			SEA	ALIVE	ENT	20.03	Y	Wednesday, June 28, 2006	EIRE	KERRY	Off the Slate, near sauce Creek, Brandon Head
T2006/52	LBT	1/2		SEA	ALIVE				Monday, July 17, 2006	EIRE	WATERFORD	Dungarvan Channel, approach off Helvick
T2006/53	LBT	2/2		SEA	ALIVE				Monday, July 17, 2006	EIRE	WATERFORD	Dungarvan Channel, approach off Heivick
T2006/54	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Sunday, August 27, 2006	EIRE	CORK	6 miles SW Mizen
T2006/55	LBT			ST	DEAD				Tuesday, August 29, 2006	EIRE	DONEGAL	directly off Crochy Head at Martello tower, near Dungloe
T2006/56	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Thursday, August 24, 2006	EIRE	CORK	6 miles west of Old Head lighthouse
T2006/57	LBT			ST	DEAD				Friday, August 18, 2006	EIRE	CORK	Power head, near Aghada
T2006/58	LBT			SEA	DEAD				Thursday, August 17, 2006	EIRE	CORK	2.5 miles SSE Roches Point
T2006/59	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Sunday, July 02, 2006	EIRE	CORK	4-5 miles SSW Old Head, Kinsale
T2006/60	LBT			SEA	ALIVE	ENT	11.01	Y	Saturday, August 05, 2006	EIRE	CORK	0.25 miles NW of the Fastnet
T2006/61	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Friday, October 20, 2006	EIRE	WEXFORD	off Wexford
T2006/62	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Tuesday, October 10, 2006	EIRE	WEXFORD	off Wexford
T2006/63	LBT			SEA	ALIVE	ENT			Tuesday, October 03, 2006	EIRE	WEXFORD	off Wexford, 5-6 miles WSW of Kilmore Quay
T2006/64	LBT			SEA	DEAD				Friday, September 22, 2006	EIRE	WEXFORD	Off Wexford 3nm east of Rosslare
T2006/65	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Saturday, October 28, 2006	EIRE	WEXFORD	East of Blackwater Bank, Wexford
T2006/66	LBT			SEA	ALIVE				Monday, July 31, 2006	EIRE	KERRY	Off Brandon, Dingle

RecordKey	Notes	ReportBy
T2006/01	PM will be carried out by Bob Reid - awaiting report.	
T2006/02	Seen by Jason Goodwin on 7th. Picked up by a local resident on 9th. PM to be carried out by Bob Reid - awaiting report.	Jason Goodwin
T2006/03	seen from yacht, was swimming north at surface. About 3 feet long	Mervyn Tonge
T2006/04	2 feet long.	Luke Cox
T2006/05	Vessel firing air guns. No jelly fish in area.	
T2006/06	1-2m. Seen by mackerel fisherman, within 10 metres of animal for 5 mins. Surfaced to breathe a few times then swam out to sea	Hayden Duck
T2006/07	Seen from seismic survey ship. Decomposed with left front flipper missing. 1.5m long. Photo with MEM and MCS.	Alison Gill
T2006/08	approx. 1.5m - seen by off duty coastguard whilst knee boarding	
T2006/09	3- 4 ft long, shell appeared to be flat ie no longitudinal ridges - moving northwards along shore in and out of groynes - seen within 10 metres	
T2006/10	1 - 2 metres, Swimming west - surfaced and breathed twice in 5 mins - observer was angling	Howard Dennis
T2006/11	Under-nourished. Taken to Weymouth Rehabilitation Centre Nov 2006 for release in 2007.	Peter and Linda Elford
T2006/12	Seen twice while windsurfing. Rough estimate 18 ins /1 metre.	euroturtle
T2006/13	Seen while fishing from rocks, calm, approaching high tide	Gary Whyte
T2006/14	Seen while sailing - head out for air twice. Approx 5 ft.	David Heal (Rainbow Sailing)
T2006/15	One metre long. Had been seen by several fisherman over several days, then not. MEM alerted BDMLR to search harbour - found nothing.	
T2006/16	18 inches. Swimming past 4 ft away while surfing - 1 minute. Black & white with lines on shell.	Mark Lawrence
T2006/17	Seen from cliffs, turtle near to rocks	?
T2006/18	7 metres from shore, could not identify as sun direct in eyes. Possibly same as T2006/09 and 15	Ann Detmar
T2006/19	Reported as decomposing. Disappeared presumed taken by tide.	
T2006/20	No further details	
T2006/21	Massive turtle - looked like upturned dingy	Mike Henstridge
T2006/22	Small turtle seen from FV Kestrel - possibly same as T2006/23 but seen 3 days apart	David Simpson
T2006/23	Small turtle seen from FV Kestrel - possibly same as T2006/22 but seen 3 days apart	David Simpson
T2006/24	Seen from yacht Wings of Morning - A sandy coloured turtle doing a sort of breaststroke in the air	Ian Duffie
T2006/25	Approx 6 feet. Seen from boat by local and others	Dr Fiona Gell
T2006/26	Two large (4-6 feet) hardshell turtles seen from rocks 35 feet away, swimming west.	Juliet Wiblim
T2006/27	Two large hardshell turtles seen from rocks 35 feet away, swimming west.	Juliet Wiblim
T2006/28	Very large turtle at least 2m in length, travelling in an easterly direction. Seen for 1 minute. Seen by birdwatcher.	Ted Abraham
T2006/29	Reported as looking 'not healthy'. Could not be relocated. Presumed to be in bay rather than stranded - more info sought	Louise Gregory
T2006/30	Decomposed remains - mainly carapace. No head. Approx 130 cm centre back and 50 cm wide. Samples taken to VLA Powhele. Photo.	Tim Spooner
T2006/31	Grey in colour, ridges on carapace.	Graham Hayes
T2006/32	Released alive from creel rope by fisherman	Davey Russel
T2006/33	Seen from SEA EXPLORER vessel. Passed behind stern of vessel in SW direction	Liz Barton
T2006/34	Enormous approx 2 metres, travelling towards shore and submerged when pursued for photo opportunity (failed)	Glyn Hughes
T2006/35	Very decomposed approx 1 m long - disappeared (see T2006/37)	David Wood
T2006/36	(MCS)	euroturtle.org
T2006/37	Decomposed carapace - possibly same animal as T2006/35. Some samples of scutes and fat taken for VLA.	
T2006/38	Decomposed carapace - (ID from photo as LBT by MEM) - may even be the same animal as T2006/37 or 35 as neither were removed from the beach.	
T2006/39	stump, old wound.	Wyn Parry
T2006/40	AD - head missing. Measurements taken and samples frozen for VLA.	Jolyon Sharpe, Alan Coltart
T2006/41	Approx 4 feet long. No head - decomposing.	
T2006/42	Advanced decomposition. Injury possible - Right flipper gone and side of head. Samples of fat and carapace taken for and held by MEM.	Patrick Dollard
T2006/43	A small animal only 10-12 ins long, good condition. Taken to Scottish Sealife Centre	Robert Sayer
T2006/44	A small animal only 10-12 ins long, pristine condition. Collected from beach and frozen by a surfer. Picked up by MEM and delivered for PM at ZSL.	Nick Saal
T2006/45	2/3 days dead CCL 146cm, CCW 110cm	Tony Murray (NPWS)
T2006/46	115+ cm badly decayed	Kevin McCormick, Tony Murray
T2006/47	Advanced decomposition. Head/flippers/tail missing. Est 1 - 1.5 m long.	Jennifer Sandy, Chris Hopkins

RecordKey	Notes	ReportBy
T2006/48	approx 1 foot long. Frozen and taken by Bob Reid for PM. Probably a Loggerhead	
T2006/49	It was already partly decayed and eaten, head was gone, but it was clearly a leatherback. See T2004/30 possibly same carcass.	Denise Fedele
T2006/50	Entangled in a lobster pot buoy rope	Donie Donohoe
T2006/51	By-catch in slamon drift nets, released alive and well. Fitted with satellite navigation system by tom Doyle et al.	T.Doyle
T2006/52	2 LBTs seen on surface by passing boat - see T2006/53	Kevin Kelly
T2006/53	2 LBTs seen on surface by passing boat - see T2006/52	Kevin Kelly
T2006/54	Dived when approached	Greville Williams
T2006/55	Carcass quite fresh - photos taken. CCL 148cm.	Pat Dunlevy
T2006/56	Head moving out of water, finally dived when approached	Ron Howe
T2006/57	Washed up on beach - had been seen drifting the day before. 163 cm. Head damaged, rest of body appeared OK.	Herman Bailey
T2006/58	Upside down and drifting - freshly dead	Ian Kellerher
T2006/59	Watched for 30 mins - dived several times	Derek Moyan
T2006/60	Found entangled in lobster pot ropes, released alive and well	Oliver Buckley
T2006/61	Swimming by boat hauling crab pots	Sean Furlong
T2006/62	Feeding on jellyfish but swam away	Sean Furlong
T2006/63	Seen on surface for 5 mins before it dived	Sean Furlong
T2006/64	Spotted from SAR helicopter. Lifeboat investigated but turtle dead.	Peter McKenzie-Brown
T2006/65	Seen by sailor - thought to be upturned boat. Raised its head and swam off as approached.	Abbey Braney
T2006/66	Spotted by slamon fisherman on last day of season	