

Hope For The Ocean Hatchlings



I enjoy tossing various colours into a palette: brilliant blue, gorgeous green or calming cyan. When I blend up all the colours into a beautiful swirl, it ends up into a breathtaking shade of colours, which reminds me of my country, Malaysia. As a Malaysian, we are known for our diversity in terms of cultures, traditions, races, ethnicity or even scrumptious food. Featuring approximately 361 mammal species, 694 bird species and 250 reptile species, Malaysia is a heavenly home for animals hiding deep in the wild. Many are critically endangered, and turtles are no exception.

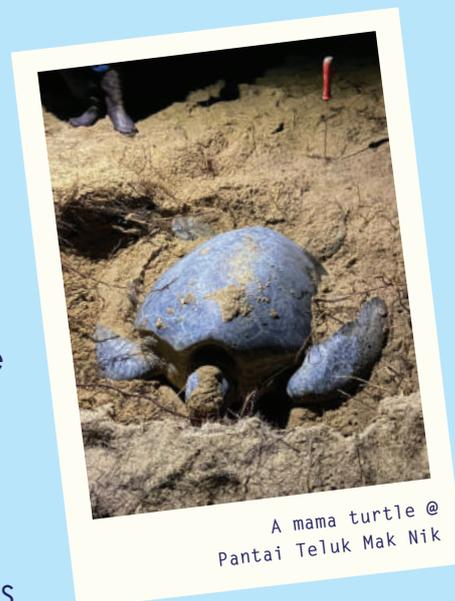
A trip to Kemaman, Terengganu in September 2022 with my family remains distinctively memorable. A home to Green and Hawksbill Turtles, it's renowned for its clear beaches. Having joined a turtle conservation, we witnessed a mother turtle laying eggs at midnight, after which 103 eggs were brought by the rangers to their hatchery to avoid predators.

The following day, we excitedly released a batch of hatchlings into the sea using the artificial light from our smartphones. Keen to see them scurrying where they rightfully belong, it was a sight to behold to witness the hatchlings being washed into the crashing deep, dark ocean.

Intrigued to learn more about these incredible cold-blooded creatures, in June 2023, my family and I joined the Lang Tengah Turtle Watch in Tanjong Jara Resort, Dungun, Terengganu. At nightfall, the trained rangers released the hatchlings



Baby turtle & I
Kemaman, Terengganu. Malaysia



A mama turtle @
Pantai Teluk Mak Nik

using only red lights since the artificial light from cameras would pose a bigger threat to the hatchlings. A pang of fear hit me as I recollected what had happened during my previous visit, whereby I guided the hatchlings into the sea with artificial light instead! I sure hope I didn't damage their eyes.



My first snorkelling trip at Tenggol Island, Terengganu

Furthermore, our experience turned all the more adventurous when we opted for snorkelling to get a glimpse of the underwater world. Truth be told, I completely fell in love ❤️ with the varied marine life such as rabbit fish, parrotfish, scissortail sergeants, clownfish “Nemo”, black sea cucumbers and clams that

swam about within the clutches of soft sea anemones and spiky corals that live in the open ocean. Additionally, my brother also delightfully spotted a Green Turtle and a Hawksbill Turtle! Honestly, **we were lucky!**

We gladly extended our support by adopting a nest of hatchlings under the name of our family and were given a detailed talk thereafter. In fact, we appreciated the initiatives of the rangers for keeping us updated on the progress of our adopted nest through emails. We were thrilled beyond words when 80% of our nest hatched successfully in August 2023.

Generally, turtle eggs take up to 45 to 60 days to hatch in which the success rate is 70% through the help of humans. The remaining 25% is achieved when it occurs naturally.

In Dungun, my brother and I were pleasantly amazed to see a nest of hatchlings emerging from their shells through the help of rangers. It was purely enchanting to see the hatchlings emerging from their shells and climbing out the sand hole to reach the ranger's soft hands.



Nest Adoption Programme
Lang Tengah Turtle Watch at Tanjong Jara Resort

One of the rangers shared his heart-rending story with us whereby he came across a nest of 111 unhatched eggs due to fungal infection. Sadly, it's just one of the untimely threats faced by the hatchlings. Believe it or not, the ghost crab's favourite snack is turtle eggs! That explains why all the nests are barricaded with nets that go one metre deep into the ground. Another reason is that some eggs can turn out to be undeveloped. For instance, some hatchlings can be albino, twins, or even two-headed! These conditions dramatically reduce the hatchlings' survival rate. Having said that, proper care is crucial from the time the mother turtle lays eggs till they're meticulously released into the sea.



Our adopted nest & I ❤️

I feel immensely accomplished and joyful

seeing the vulnerable turtles being given another chance to roam the earth. As we know it, humans have polluted the earth so much, and there is no turning back. The least we can do is to extend a helping hand and save the wildlife from extinction. This makes me believe there is still some good and kindness in humanity.



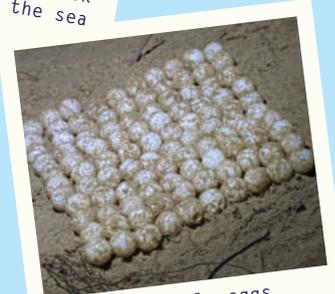
Mama turtle back to the sea
Terengganu, Malaysia



Lang Tengah Turtle Watch
@ Tanjung Jara Resort



Guiding baby turtles back
to the sea



103 turtle eggs