Olive ridley turtles nest in California

LEVEL B1


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I. WARM-UP

1. Have you ever seen a sea turtle, on TV or in person?
2. What rules should people follow on wildlife beaches?
3. How could warmer seas affect animals?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

nest
To lay eggs in a safe place and cover them for protection.

coastal
Relating to the sea and the land next to it.

document
To record or prove something with photos, notes or reports.

theory
An idea that tries to explain why something happens.

hatch
(Of an egg) to break open so that a baby animal can come out.

predator
An animal that hunts and eats other animals.

fence
A barrier used to protect or separate an area.

hotline
A special phone number for reporting a problem or getting help quickly.

III. READING

In a first for the US west coast, two olive ridley sea turtles were seen nesting on Orange County beaches in California. One was recorded near Seal Beach, and another on Huntington Beach. The cases were documented by officials and confirmed as two different turtles.

Olive ridleys usually nest much farther south, in Mexico and Central America. Scientists are discussing theories for the change, such as warmer coastal waters, recent hurricanes and El Niño. The eggs are expected to hatch in 45 to 60 days.

Because heat affects whether babies are male or female, very warm sand can produce mostly females. The new nests have been surrounded by fences to reduce risks from predators, high tides and people. Locals are advised to keep at least 50 ft away and not interfere.

To report a sighting, tell a lifeguard or call Noaa's marine animal stranding hotline. Rescued turtles can also be seen in rehabilitation tanks at an aquarium in Long Beach.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **The Guardian***: "In historic first, tropical turtles spotted...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where in California were the two turtle nests found?
2. Why are scientists surprised by these nestings?
3. What are two theories for the northward nesting?
4. How long might the eggs take to hatch?
5. What should people do if they see a sea turtle?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Should busy beaches close areas to protect nests? Why?
2. How might warmer oceans change animal behaviour near you?
3. What should visitors do if they see fenced wildlife areas?
4. Are aquariums useful for education and rescue? Why or why not?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Passive voice

Use the passive to focus on the action or the person/thing affected, not who did it. Form: be + past participle (is/are/was/were + past participle).

"One **was recorded** *near Seal Beach."*
"The cases **were documented by officials**.*"*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence with the correct passive form of the verb in brackets.

1. So far, two nesting turtles (see) ___ in California. _____
2. Baby turtles (affect) ___ by the heat of the sand. _____
3. The eggs (expect) ___ to hatch in 45 to 60 days. _____
4. Rescued turtles (keep) ___ in rehabilitation tanks at a Long Beach aquarium. _____
5. Every year, many turtle eggs (lay) ___ on beaches in Mexico. _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


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I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 10 minutes vocabulary, 12–15 minutes reading and comprehension, 8–10 minutes grammar, 10–12 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach key items: olive ridley (species name), coastal, nest, hatch, predator, hotline. Use photos of sea turtles and a simple map of Orange County.
- Run the reading in two passes: first for gist (what happened, where), then for detail (numbers like 45–60 days, 50 ft). Pair-check answers before brief whole-class feedback.
- For discussion, set clear beach-safety language (keep distance, do not touch). If opinions on closing beaches get strong, start in pairs before open debate so quieter voices join.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Take a quick show of hands, then pair opponents to swap reasons before sharing.
2. Prompt with examples from local coasts or rivers to help ideas flow.
3. Elicit do/don't phrases from the text and board them as a checklist.
4. Ask for one benefit and one limit of aquariums, with a local example if possible.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Role-play: In pairs, act out calling Noaa's hotline to report a sighting; include place, time and safety steps (6 minutes).

Writing: Design a 50-word beach sign to protect turtle nests, using facts from the article (8 minutes).

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

Grammar exercise: Passive voice

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

TEACHERS ONLY

These answers are for teachers only. Please do not share this page with students.


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IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where in California were the two turtle nests found?
   Near Seal Beach and on Huntington Beach, in Orange County.
2. Why are scientists surprised by these nestings?
   Because olive ridleys usually nest much farther south.
3. What are two theories for the northward nesting?
   Any two of: warmer coastal waters, recent hurricanes, El Niño.
4. How long might the eggs take to hatch?
   About 45 to 60 days.
5. What should people do if they see a sea turtle?
   Keep at least 50 ft away and tell a lifeguard or call Noaa's hotline.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Use the passive to focus on the action or the person/thing affected, not who did it. Form: be + past participle (is/are/was/were + past participle).

"One **was recorded** *near Seal Beach."*
"The cases **were documented by officials**.*"*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence with the correct passive form of the verb in brackets.

1. So far, two nesting turtles ___ in California. **have been seen**
2. Baby turtles ___ by the heat of the sand. **are affected**
3. The eggs ___ to hatch in 45 to 60 days. **are expected**
4. Rescued turtles ___ in rehabilitation tanks at a Long Beach aquarium. **are kept**
5. Every year, many turtle eggs ___ on beaches in Mexico. **are laid**