Endangered Species & Major Threats

Endangered Species

All 7 species of sea turtle are either critically endangered or threatened. Only a fraction of the thousands of hatchlings emerging from their nests will survive to adulthood.

Natural obstacles between a turtle and survival exist, but it is the increasing threats caused by humans that are driving them towards extinction.

The population of leatherbacks has declined by 95% over just the past 25 years.

Major Threats

- Poaching of turtles and turtle eggs.
- Drowning in shrimp nets and being dragged by longline hooks set by tuna and swordfish fishers.
- Destruction of nesting beaches.
- Pollution and plastic debris in the ocean
- Pollution can affect the health of turtles and make them more susceptible to disease, especially Fibro papilloma (a chronic disease which causes tumors).
- Turtles mistake plastic bags and other garbage for jellyfish.
- Climate change- warming ocean temperatures are likely to negatively impact the food resources for sea turtles and other marine species.

To learn more about and understand the impacts of longline fishing and protective sustainable fishing practices, visit www.seaturtles.org and www.seashepherd.org