

Project Update: February 2018

Our high-resolution study at San Jose Island, Mexico is providing data on habitat use and preferences. In fact, it has shown that Eastern Pacific hawksbills forage for extended periods (months) within highly restricted (less than 2 km²) mangrove habitats, a pattern already identified in other foraging regions within the Eastern Pacific.

It is worth mentioning the high density of individuals within this mangrove estuary. We have identified 88 individuals of different sizes (ranging from 35 to 91.3 cm curved carapace length). This data places the mangrove estuary at San Jose Island as a hotspot for the species in the region.

Finally, the use of critter cameras, a novel technique with this species, has provided information on food preferences and daily activity patterns. Data shows that hawksbills forage mainly on sponges, algae beds and surprisingly on mangrove roots. This knowledge is extremely important because will help identify other mangrove habitats with similar biophysical features where hawksbills' conservation efforts can be placed.

I'm including a picture and the link of a video I made with images from the turtles' recordings: <https://vimeo.com/206500705>



Luli and hawksbill. ©Lilly Dayton