

Project Update: January 2018

The 2017 field season was successful. We tagged nine hawksbill turtles in four locations within the Gulf of California, Mexico: Loreto BCS, Agua Verde BCS, San Jose Island, BCS and Espiritu Santo Island, BCS. Preliminary data has confirmed a strong association of this species to mangrove and rocky reef habitats. For instance, Clara, a female hawksbill of more than 90 cm CCL (curved carapace length), has been at the estuary of San Jose island for 2 years.

Having deployed satellite tags on hawksbill sea turtles at five different locations, this gave us information on the limited distribution range of individuals compared to other sea turtle species. This behaviour has been demonstrated in other regions and it is associated to the quality of food within the foraging grounds. Interestingly, hawksbill sea turtles have been found in areas that have some type of protection; either as a natural protected area or as a fish refugee. This can be a clear evidence of the relevance of these strategies to protect these marine vertebrates and therefore the habitats they depend on.

Hawksbill ID	Site	Satellite tag	Release date	Transmitting days
165128- Gina	Loreto, BCS	Fastloc	07.03.17	60
169348- Ajenjo	Agua Verde, BCS	Fastloc	05.31.17	110
171175- Luli	San Jose Island	Satellite	05.17.17	
171174- Clara	San Jose Island	Satellite	06.12.17	
165127- Shellyback	San Jose Island	Fastloc	06.15.17	6
169346- Marta	San Jose Island	Fastloc	06.17.17	
169347- Mingo	Espiritu Santo Island	Fastloc	06.25.17	
165125- Daniella	Espiritu Santo Island	Fastloc	06.25.17	48
165126- OMG	Espiritu Santo Island	Fastloc	06.25.17	79

*Individuals with no transmitting day's records are still transmitting



Figure 1. Satellite tracking records from three hawksbill sea turtles at Espiritu Santo Island, Mexico



Figure 2. Juan Cuevas, fisherman and conservationist, releasing a satellite tagged hawksbill sea turtle in Loreto, BCS.