The Impact of Buildings on Loggerhead Sea Turtle Nests

Wood, Michael (School: Islands High School)

The Loggerhead sea turtle (Caretta Caretta) is a species of sea turtle that, much like other turtles, is classified as endangered. It is the primary turtle that comes onto the beaches of Tybee Island to lay its eggs. A major problem for the Loggerhead sea turtles is that many of them do not make it past infancy, some do not even hatch. This can be due to various reasons affecting the nests. Every day scientists and turtle experts research ways to improve the survival rate of all turtles, including Loggerheads. During this test, proximity of nests to buildings on Tybee Island is the factor studied to see how it affects the turtle nest hatch success rate. After collecting and studying the data it was confirmed that distance from building does not have a strong correlation with turtle nest hatch success rate. This could be due to the fact that Tybee usually makes an effort to move nests that are in undesirable locations to help more turtles survive. Also other factors could affect the nests that weren't tested. In the future I may incorporate more factors to have a broader understanding of why some eggs don't make it while others do.

Awards Won: