

SATELLITE TRACKING OF ADULT LOGGERHEADS (*CARETTA CARETTA*) AROUND WATERS OF CAPE VERDE ARCHIPELAGO (WESTERN AFRICA)

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Abstract

During the 1999 nesting season (from June to October), four satellite transmitters were attached to two males and two females of *Caretta caretta* from Boavista Island (Cape Verde Archipelago, western Africa), where density of nesting females is the highest in the whole archipelago. Transmitters did not work as well as expected, resulting in a low number of locations, possibly due to the neritic behavior of adult loggerheads at reproductive habitat, with the antennae exposed to continuous rubbing. Therefore, we establish a conservative hypothesis about movements of *C. caretta* in Cape Verde. The two males monitored remained close to Boavista, one of them until mid-November, and both females exhibited a different pattern, remaining close to the island until the end of the season, subsequently traveling eastwards a long distance, possibly towards the African coast. On the other hand, out of the nesting season, some males (including a young one) have been observed in the nearby coast, but not between December and March; a few females have been observed nesting in March. Taking these results into account, we believe males stay in Boavista throughout the whole nesting season, departing to feeding habitat later than females, and then arriving in Boavista earlier for reproduction. Close proximity of feeding habitat could explain why some females nest out of the typical season.