

Threats to Nesting Sea Turtles on Mainland Antigua

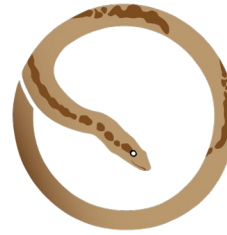


WIDECAST Costa Rica 2024

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About the EAG

- Antigua & Barbuda's oldest environmental NGO, and has been at the forefront of conservation work for **over 30 years.**
- Our tagline, "**For the benefit of people and wildlife.**"
- 3 core programmes
- AMCP launching in 2021 as the newest programme



**OFFSHORE
ISLANDS
CONSERVATION
PROGRAMME**



**REDONDA
ECOSYSTEM
RESERVE**



**ANTIGUA MARINE
CONSERVATION
PROGRAMME**

Introduction to the AMCP

- ASTP started in 2007- 2014
- AMCP launched in 2021 with island wide surveys
- 2022 was the first year of a consistent nest monitoring protocol on 10 beaches
- The AMCP is focused on endangered species conservation through ecosystem based management and community participation.





Summary of Sea Turtle Activities

Nesting Beach Monitoring and Protection

- Monitoring 11 beaches during July-November seasons
- Tagging Turtles
- Nest monitoring and relocations
- Protection of Key Sea Turtle Beaches

Sea Turtle Stranding Response

- Hotel/ Restaurant response
- Training hotels on Sea Turtle management and protocols
- Sea Turtle Hotline calls

Invasive species control

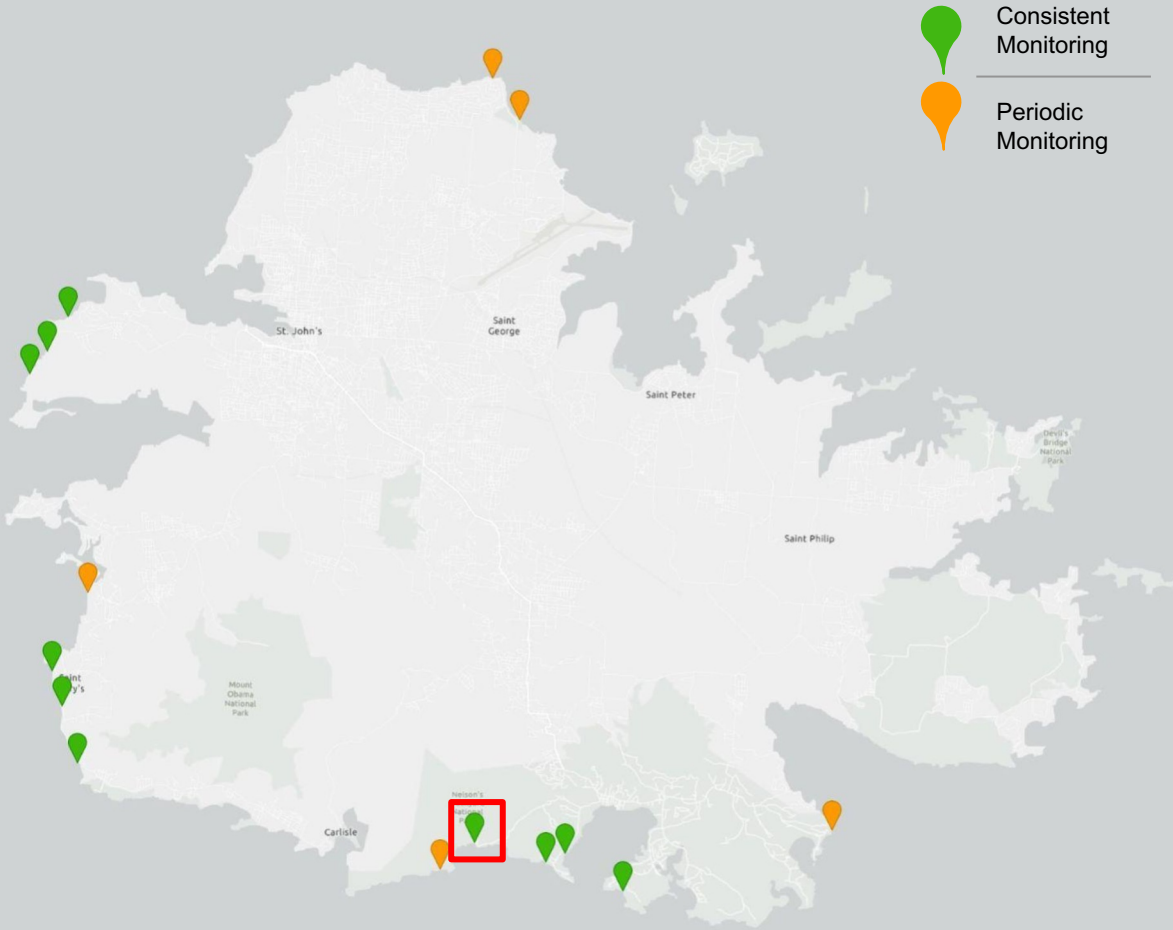
- Threat Identification
- Species indexing
- Trial mongoose control protocol

The ultimate goal of our monitoring activity is the special protection for critically important sea turtle areas under the (EPMA 2019) & Fisheries Act (2006) of Antigua & Barbuda..

Nesting Beach Monitoring and Protection

Nesting seasons in review

	2022	2023
Volunteers	67	73
Hawksbills nests	35	37
Green nests	8	29
Total Nests	43	66

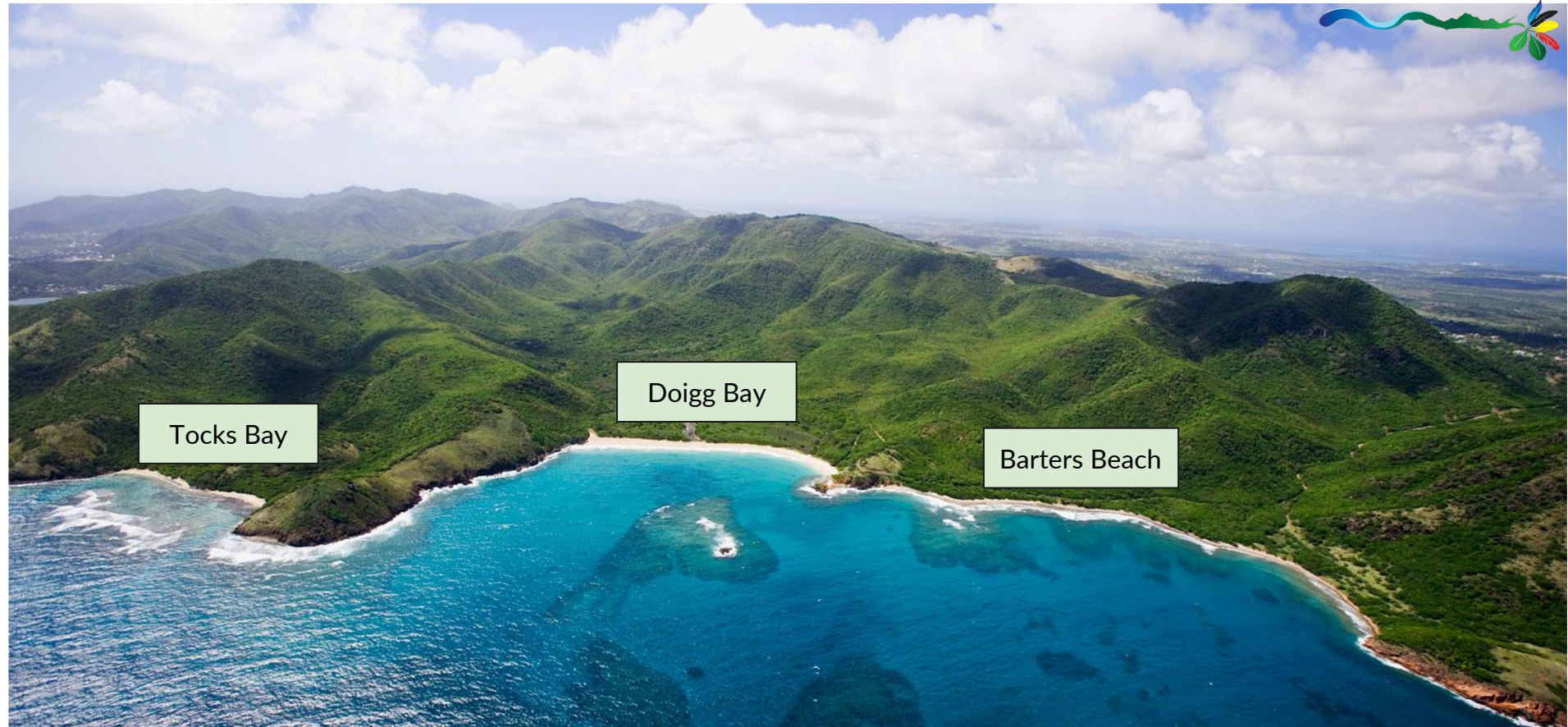




Rendezvous Bay

- Undeveloped and Remote
- Limited access (2km on unmaintained dirt road)
- Leatherback, Green, Hawksbill nesting
- 2 beaches Doigg (600m) & Barters (300m)
- 62% of the Greens observed





Tocks Bay

Doigg Bay

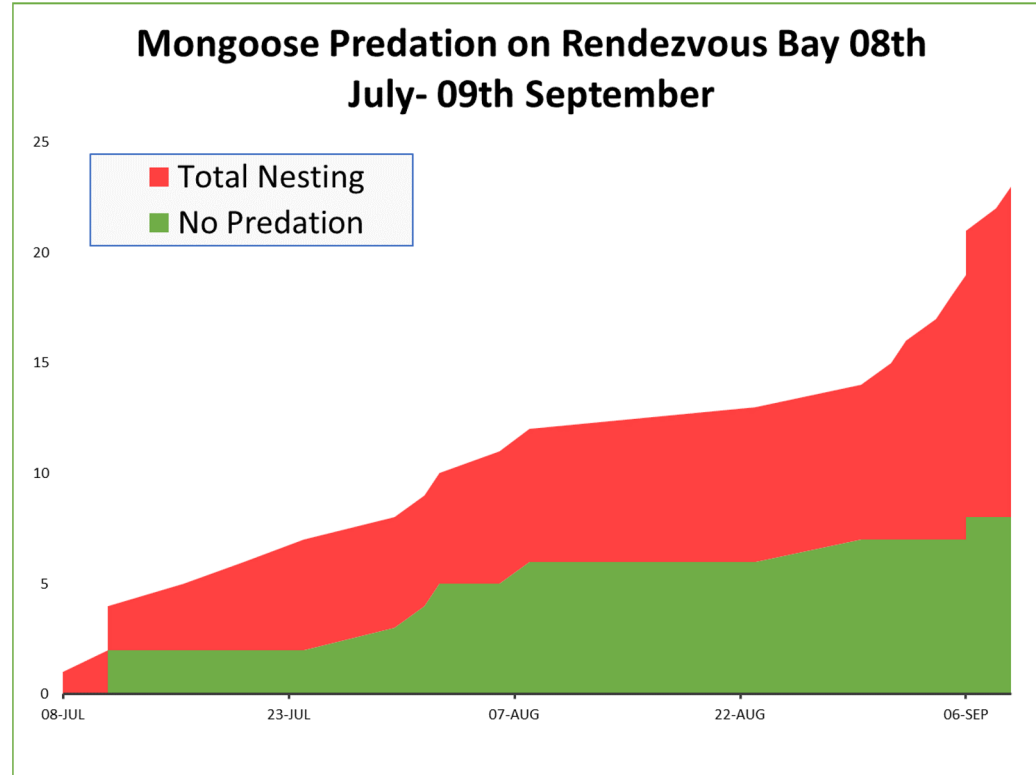
Barters Beach



Small Indian Mongoose (*Herpestes auropunctatus*)

Mongoose Predation

- Predation first recorded on Rendezvous in 2014
- **65%** of nests predated within 3 days of laying.
- **83%** of Hawksbills nests were predated
- **65%** of Green Nests were predated
- **75%** of nests under vegetation predated
- **40%** of exposed nests predated



Severe Weather Events



- Beach loss of up to 20m
- Recovered within 3 weeks
- Beach was completely inaccessible for the month of October and November for patrols

Sargassum Inundation

- Especially heavy during July-August
- 5 false crawls most likely due to sargassum impediment
- Hatchlings entangled within Sargassum



Next Steps for the Programme



In water Monitoring for Sea Turtles and their Associated Ecosystems around Antigua and Redonda

Working with Government and Stakeholders for the Special designation of important sea turtle nesting sites and habitats

Building rapport with Hotels and Restaurants on beaches with turtle activity

Large scale mongoose control for other index beaches

Thank you!



Simon Ager/Sea Shepherd



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