

2nd MEETING OF THE YOUTH OF THE CALIFORNIAS FOR THE CONSERVATION OF SEA TURTLES

For the most part, the success of an environmental education program is measured on its ability to diminish or mitigate negative impacts on the natural environment. Environmental education does this by motivating people to participate in solving environmental problems, bringing people together from all sectors and age groups in society.

Under the framework of the 8th Annual Meeting of the Grupo Tortuguero, the 2nd MEETING OF THE YOUTH OF THE CALIFORNIAS FOR THE CONSERVATION OF SEA TURTLES took place in Loreto from the 27th to the 29th of January, 2006. The event was organized by Grupo Tortuguero, Pro Peninsula, Grupo Ecologista Antares, and the H. IX Ayuntamiento, BCS, working through the Sea Turtle Protection Program. The latter was in charge of developing the program, under the direction of the Biologist Graciela Tiburcio, and the Master in Sciences Sergio Román García, with the help of the education department of Acuario Mazatlan.

Through the specially designed classroom activities and workshops, the central goal was that participants would come out of the meeting enabled to: 1) Understand the urgency of participating sea turtle and environmental conservation campaigns; 2) Develop new habits and behaviors regarding the environment, contributing to the conservation of natural resources; and 3) Obtain the knowledge and tools necessary to develop projects that can be carried out in their schools and communities.

During the event, approximately 70 children from 13 different communities throughout the Baja California Peninsula and the United States were in attendance.

The prestigious Carolina Anderson Award was given to the youth community of Bahía de Los Angeles in recognition of their efforts towards marine turtle conservation. JABA (Jovenes Ambientalistas de Bahía de Los Angeles [Young Environmentalists of Bahia de Los Angeles]) received the award, having performed the puppet theatrical production TORTUGOPOLIS, which reflects the problems behind sea turtle consumption and possible solutions. The Carolina Anderson Award was instituted as a tribute to Mrs. Anderson, who dedicated the final years of her life to protecting Baja California's sea turtles; it also recognizes the many foreign citizens who work and donate resources to conservation in Mexico, and especially in Baja California.

During the 3 days of work, of special note were the presentations by Wallace J. Nicholls "Revolución Oceánica" [Ocean Revolution], and the workshop by Natalia Duarte of PROFEPA, as well as the board game developed and presented by participants in "Aquatic Adventures," from the United States.

It's important to point out that although children and young people are the future of our planet, we cannot wait until tomorrow to take action; future generations must today involve themselves in conservation movements.