



## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Padre Island National Seashore  
P. O. Box 181300  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78480-1300



Dear Turtle Adopter,

Thank you for adopting a Kemp's ridley sea turtle! We hope you will proudly display all of the items contained in this packet as a show of support for the sea turtle program at Padre Island National Seashore. Western National Parks Association donates the entire cost of each packet to the park's turtle program. Your contribution is deposited in a special donation account that funds the effort by the National Park Service to save the Kemp's ridley and other species of sea turtles from extinction.

Initial efforts to increase Kemp's ridley nesting at Padre Island National Seashore began in 1978. Since then, tens of thousands of Kemp's ridley hatchlings have been incubated and released. During nearly every year since 1996 increasing numbers of Kemp's ridley nests have been located at the National Seashore. The park is now the most important Kemp's ridley nesting beach in the United States in terms of the numbers of nests located annually. This indicates that the turtles are nesting in ever-increasing numbers with each passing year.

Despite the recent successes, much work still remains. Your purchase of this "Adopt a Turtle" packet will help in our continuing efforts to save these wonderful sea-dwelling reptiles. In addition to much needed supplies and equipment, your purchase also helps support our turtle patrol team. The team is comprised of temporary employees and volunteers who patrol the 80-mile length of North Padre Island on a continual, daily basis from April through mid-July, the peak turtle nesting period. Once a nest site is discovered, a radio call is made to park headquarters whereupon a trained biologist is immediately dispatched to the scene. The eggs are protected until they hatch approximately 48 to 53 days later. The baby turtles are then released into the Gulf of Mexico to begin their lives with the hope that the females will return here as adults to lay their own eggs. Thus the perpetuation of the species continues.

Many of the hatchling releases are open to the public and, as an "official turtle adopter," we invite you to attend one of these events. Turtle releases occur throughout the summer months. Please call the 24-hour Hatchling Hotline at (361) 949-7163 for a recorded message with up-to-date information on scheduled turtle releases.

Again, on behalf of the National Park Service, thank you for adopting a Kemp's ridley turtle. Be assured that every cent you spent will support the sea turtle program, a worthy cause indeed!

Sincerely,

Joe Escoto  
Superintendent

