

**ARTIFICIAL INCUBATION AND EMBRYONIC DEVELOPMENT
OF OLIVE RIDLEY TURTLE EGGS
(*Lepidochelys olivacea* Eschscholtz)**

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ABSTRACT

Studies on artificial incubation and embryonic development of olive ridley turtle took place at Phuket Marine Biological Center during 1980-1985. The eggs of ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) were collected from the nesting beaches. Using the styrofoam box incubation technique the eggs were incubated at atmospheric temperature conditions. The embryonic development of eggs was observed by removing eggs from the nest. The different stages of developing embryos were recorded daily under a microscope. After 10 days incubation, head and eyes were prominent. The carapace was distinguished on the 23rd day, the complete characters were developed after 35 days. The hatchling was 38.6 mm in carapace length, 33.9 mm in carapace width and about 16.8 g in weight. The hatching success in styrofoam box incubation was 69.7%-83.2%, the incubation period was 58 - 64 days at an average temperature of 26.6 - 30°C. The hatching success in styrofoam boxes was not significantly different from hatching of eggs reburied in sand of the nesting beach (hatch rate was 58.0% - 83.9%).