



Post Fellowship Reporting - Project Summary

Report Title: Turtle Searchers: Our Greek Experience **Name:** Sandra Murphy & Jamie Rayford
Other Team Members:
Program: Greater Houston Area Program
Trip Dates: 11/30/-0001 - 11/30/-0001 **Location Visited:** Greece
Post Fellowship Reporting Template: PFR Template 01

Project Summary: Greece, a Mediterranean country, 'surrounded by numerous beautiful islands, with a wonderfully rich and ancient history, is the perfect place to study loggerhead turtle conservation. From the Temple of Olympian Zeus and the Acropolis to Delphi (the center of Ancient World) to the islands of Crete and Zanthythos, where loggerhead sea turtles nest, the Turtle Searchers adventured during the summer of 2008. Inspired by the splendors of coastal living, the Turtle Searchers wanted to bring value to the environmental issue of sea turtle endangerment.

Archelon (the Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece), is committed to the conservation and survival of the loggerhead sea turtles in the Mediterranean for more than 20 years. Through this society several beaches on the islands of Crete and Zanthythos are designated as nesting beaches. During the hours of 7pm to 7am, tourists are not allowed because this is the time the adult loggerhead turtles come ashore to lay their eggs and the hatchlings return to the sea. During our visit, we were pleased to see signs posted on the beaches and world-wide volunteers stationed to ensure compliance. We learned that it is possible to enjoy our waterways while protecting the organisms that live there.

Career Impact: Our Greek experience was a global classroom for us. It proved that the responsibility of caring for our oceans and the organisms that live there must be done world wide. At home we must ask ourselves what can be done to improve our coastal area. We observed that little things will add up to major differences in saving the sea turtles from the endangered species list. Because of the contributions of the public, Archelon is successful in its efforts of sea turtle conservation. This experience challenges us to increase

the awareness of endangered species. This journey rejuvenated our passion for discovery and exploration of living things and we want to pass on this passion on to our students.

Since Athens is visited by many people of different countries, we had the pleasure of interacting with people from various parts of the world, which included Austria, South Africa, India, Japan, England and Turkey, just to mention a few. Because of this experience we want to inspire our students to learn more about other cultures. It was fun using another monetary system other than the American dollar. During our travels, we were able to compare the value of currency all over the world with the Euro.

Classroom/Community Impact:We will share the knowledge gained from our fellowship to encourage other teachers, students and the community to become more involved in saving our environment, starting with the endangered sea turtles. Our course of action will include distributing information on organizations that are actively monitoring the sea turtle and informing the community of what they can do to support these organizations, such as becoming a volunteer. A simple thing that the public can do to protect our Texas coast line would be to report any threats to sea turtles, nesting turtles or hatchlings, as well as sightings of dead or injured sea turtles. Fueled by the knowledge and understanding obtained during our travels, we will incorporate what we have learned into district curriculum and classroom lesson plans.

Open Response: The splendor of Greece made a digital photographic essay effortless to comprise. This photographic essay and collage of the beautiful Greek coast line and the magnificent sea turtles will be shared with the students and colleagues. This will inspire and assist the students in creating their own research of an endangered species and its habitat, integrating biology, aquatic science, environmental science, chemistry, and geography.

Quote: This journey rejuvenated our passion for discovery and exploration of living things and we want to pass on this passion on to our students.

Photos:



Greece Our Journey Begins



Ruins Of Delphi



Loggerhead Swimming off the coast of Zanthytos



Injured Sea Turtle at Rescue Center



Waters of Loggerhead



View From the Acropolis



St marina Island



Islands scenery of Zanthythos