



Olive Ridley Turtles

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Olive Ridley turtles have not yet arrived for mass nesting at Odisha's Rushikulya rookery and Devi river mouth.

- The reasons are not fully understood yet. Although it is held that climatic parameters, as well as beach conditions, decide mass nesting at a coast.
- However, Mass nesting has already occurred at the Gahirmatha coast (Bhitarkanika National Park) of the Odisha. Mass nesting of Olive Ridleys can occur up to any time till the end of April.

Rushikulya River

- Rushikulya rookery coast in Ganjam district of Odisha.
- The Rushikulya River is one of the major rivers in the state of Odisha and covers entire catchment area in the districts of Kandhamal and Ganjam district of Odisha

Devi River

Devi river is one of the principal distributaries of Mahanadhi. It flows through Jagatsinghpur district and Puri district across Odisha state in India and joins the Bay of Bengal.

Olive Ridley

- The **Olive ridley turtles are the smallest and most abundant of all sea turtles** found in the world, inhabiting warm waters of the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian oceans.
- They are best known for their unique mass nesting called **Arribada**, where thousands of females come together on the same beach to lay eggs.
- The species is listed as **Vulnerable in the IUCN Red List, Appendix 1 in CITES, and Schedule 1 in Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.**

- Olive-ridleys **face serious threats** across their migratory route, habitat and nesting beaches, due to human activities such as **unfriendly turtle fishing practices, development, and exploitation of nesting beaches for ports, and tourist centers.**

Bhitarkanika National Park

- Bhitarkanika National Park is one of Odisha's finest biodiversity hotspots and is famous for its **mangroves, migratory birds, turtles, estuarine crocodiles, and countless creeks.**
- The wetland is represented by 3 Protected Areas, **the Bhitarkanika National Park, the Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary and the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary.**
- Bhitarkanika is located in the estuary of **Brahmani, Baitarani, Dhamra, and Mahanadi river systems.**
- It is said to house 70% of the country's estuarine or saltwater crocodiles, conservation of which was started way back in 1975.