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MASIGALGAL RANGERS PROTECT RARE GREEN TURTLE NEST

A Green Turtle nest was discovered on Masig Island, the first one seen in a number of years by the community.

Masigalgal Rangers erected a fence to stop feral animals and goannas digging up the nest and as an indication for the community that the nest was being monitored.

The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) Acting Chairperson, Mr Aven S. Noah, said marine turtles hadn't been laying at Masig Island for quite some time.

"Its location was in a high traffic area next to the wharf where locals anchor their boats, so putting protection measures in place was very important," Mr Noah said.

"Masig Senior Ranger Francis Nai, Masig Ranger Loice Naawi and NRM Officer (Sea) Ronald Fujii fenced off the site for the eight weeks of incubation.

"The Masig Rangers monitored the site every day to ensure the fencing was secure and there weren't any issues, and in case the turtles hatched early."

The eggs produced 92 hatchlings, two of which were killed by ghost crabs, with the remaining counted and released by the Rangers.

"Green turtles return to breed at the location they hatched from, so we hope that these baby turtles return to Masig to breed in the future," Mr Noah said.

"The Masig Rangers have been monitoring for nesting turtles around the island regularly to protect these nests.

"The Rangers have also have been conducting awareness sessions with the community to talk about the importance of protecting turtle nests."

Monitoring and education of the community about turtle behaviour is an important aspect of the Rangers work and forms part of the Masigalgal Dugong and Turtle Management Plan.

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Caption: The temporary fencing put up by the Masigalgal Rangers to protect the green turtle nest (image: TSRA)



Caption: Masigalgal Senior Ranger Francis Nai and Ranger Loice Naawi monitored the nesting site daily (Image: TSRA)



Caption: The green turtle hatchlings heading for the ocean after being counted and released by the Masigalgal Rangers for monitoring purposes (Image: TSRA)