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## Local

# Dash of the tiny turtles

## Kemp's ridley hatchlings sprint for the sea

By Adriana Garza (Contact)

Originally published 01:00 a.m., June 14, 2007

Updated 04:34 a.m., June 14, 2007



Rachel Blair/Special to the Caller-times About 175 baby Kemp's ridley sea turtle hatchlings scramble for the Gulf early Wednesday in the first such public turtle release of the season.

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About 175 Kemp's ridley turtle hatchlings were released at Padre Island National Seashore early Wednesday morning, the first local public release of the endangered sea turtles this season.

Donna Shaver,

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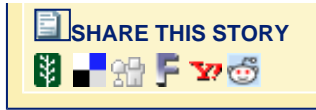
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National Park Service director of the sea turtle project, said

that about 250 people gathered to watch the hatchling release, cheering for the first and last few tiny turtles that made their way into the Gulf of Mexico.

"It went very well," Shaver said. "The turtles were active and crawled down the beach, entered the surf and swam away."

This year a record 118 Kemp's ridley turtle nests have been found along the Texas Gulf Coast, including 69 nests found at Padre Island National Seashore. Shaver said the 118 nests represent the most found since record-keeping of the findings began in the 1980s.

Shaver said two loggerhead turtle nests also have been found at Padre Island National Seashore this year.

Shaver said she expects about 10 more public releases through the end of July.

Contact Adriana Garza at 886-3618 or garzaa@caller.com

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