

ON THE SYNTHETIC MATERIALS FOUND IN THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEMS OF, AND
DISCHARGED BY, SEA TURTLES COLLECTED IN WATERS ADJACENT TO JAPAN

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ABSTRACT

It has been recognized that five species of sea turtles are common in waters adjacent to Japan: *Caretta caretta*, *Chelonia mydas*, *Eretmochelys imbricata*, *Lepidochelys olivacea*, and *Dermochelys coriacea*. Stranded, live turtles collected along the coast of central and southern Japan were examined, and most were found to have ingested synthetic materials into their systems during the research period. The main types of plastics found were transparent bags or sheeting, monofilament fishing line, and rope parts. Large plastic sheets were ingested particularly by the leatherback turtle, *D. coriacea*. It is concluded that most of the sea turtles found in waters adjacent to Japan have a high frequency of plastic ingestion.