

AV & Software Reviews

TURTLE POPULATION RESTORATION

The Last Journey for the Leatherback? 2005. DVD by Stanley M. Minasian. Produced by the Sea Turtle Restoration Project. Developed by Robert Ovetz, Ph.D. P.O. Box 400, Forest Knolls, CA 94933. (415) 488-0370 x 106. Significant discount offered to teachers. Running time: 28 minutes.

Teacher's kit can be downloaded at www.seaturtles.org/teachers/cfm.

I was interested in viewing this DVD on leatherback turtles as I had done an Earthwatch expedition in St. Croix on the leatherback turtles. The DVD is superb—I loved seeing the turtles in their natural environment and seeing the hatchlings brought back fond memories of late nights on the beaches awaiting their arrival out of the sand! Great photography. One of the marine biology teachers said that it could be used to expand her lesson on sustainable fishing. She said that she was impressed with the scientists interviewed—such as Sylvia Earle. The interviewees represented a good cross section of people.

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The video also brought in the natural and human-made problems that the turtles faced in the recent past (gill nets) and the present (long lines). Some of the video is rather depressing and emotional—so I would not envision it being used for young students. It does make the activities at the end of the teacher's kit such as, "What You and Your Students Can Do!" more valuable. We need to encourage our students to believe that we can make a positive difference and then show them how to do so. The demonstration of the turtle exclusion device was a positive change and shows that people can do things to help these magnificent animals (along with many others).

Several of the lessons are, in my opinion, not suitable for most high school students. They are just too juvenile, even "corny" to quote the marine biology teacher. Middle school students would benefit the most with the teacher's kit activities. But the video alone would be worth your time as well as the section on what one can do to help.

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HUMAN GENETICS

Heredity in a human context. 2005. CD-ROM. By Oof Oud and Geoff Rickards. Produced by ETI Information Services Ltd, PO Box 3373, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG41 1XN United Kingdom. £52.95 including shipping by air. For ordering information visit www.etiis.org.uk.

Part of the Beating the Biology book series www.science.uva.nl/bbb.

System Requirements:

- Windows 98, ME, NT 3.5.1 or higher, 2000 or XP
- 16 Mb free application RAM
- Display resolution at least 800 x 800 pixels and 16 bit color

This program covers genetics for advanced high school students and undergraduates. Its focus is on human heredity and includes the following topics:

- Monohybrid and dihybrid ratios
- Controlled crosses and human pedigrees
- Sex chromosomes and sex linkage
- Pleiotropy and polygenes
- Dominance and epistasis
- Linkage, recombination and gene maps
- Maternal inheritance and imprinted genes
- Genes in populations
- Good genes and bad genes
- Twins and heritability
- Genetic and environmental factors
- Ethical issues in genetics

In addition, there is an integrated approach at the level of individual, cells, and DNA, RNA, and proteins. Each module is properly covered as a tutorial type, and easy to navigate (it includes a section on how to use the tutorial). The end of the program includes a diagnostic test, which the student can attempt as many times as she/he wishes. In the event of an incorrect answer, the correct answer can be provided with a full explanation. I particularly found this feature extremely useful given the difficult nature of many of the questions.