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Carapacial Scute Variation in Green Turtle, *Chelonia mydas* Hatchlings in Northern Cyprus

Burcu ÖZDEMİR, Oğuz TÜRKOZAN

Adnan Menderes University, Faculty of Science and Arts, Department of Biology, Aydın, 09010 -
TURKEY

 [Keywords](#)
[Authors](#)



zool@tubitak.gov.tr

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Abstract: The carapacial scutes of 718 green turtle hatchlings, *Chelonia mydas* (Linnaeus, 1758), from 2 different nesting beaches in Northern Cyprus were examined. Scutes were examined with regard to variation within carapacial scute series and variation in carapacial scute pattern. The vertebral, costal and marginal series were the most variable and the supracaudal scutes were almost stable for the hatchlings. The most common scute pattern observed was 11 pairs of marginals, 4 pairs of costals, 5 vertebrals, 2 supracaudals and a single nuchal. The straight carapace length (SCL) of the hatchlings ranged from 39 to 51 mm with a weight that varied between 13 and 26 g. Negative allometric growth was reported between straight carapace length and weight.

Key Words: Scute variation, carapace, green turtle, hatchlings, Northern Cyprus

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