

Update from Colin & Audrey Gibson

Lebanon. March 2021



### **Oil Spill threatens wildlife and beaches.**

Many of you will have read in the news recently about the oil that has washed up on the beaches of Israel / Palestine. Sadly the oil has also affected some of the beaches in southern Lebanon, including the Nature Reserve at Tyre, an important site for turtle breeding. Only last September we were reading that as Lebanon reeled from multiple tragedies, conservationists were pointing to one bright spot: a record number of endangered green sea turtles coming to nest on the country's shores. Loggerhead turtles have also come in large numbers. The oil spill now threatens the breeding grounds of these turtles. As is often the case in Lebanon, much of the clean up is being organised by local NGO's, though further to the north in Sidon, the public were told it was too risky to go to the beach and that trained teams would be conducting a survey and assessing the damage. In any case, travelling in Lebanon has been difficult for the past couple of weeks due to roads being closed by people protesting about

the failing economy.



Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*)

#### **Wild Lebanon Website.**

For those of you who might be interested in learning more about the plants and animals of Lebanon you can visit our Wild Lebanon website: <http://www.wildlebanon.org/>. It's a great resource although it now needs a little updating – when we have time! It is quite interactive – a 'first of its kind' when originally produced – and rich in pictures and information of what can be seen throughout Lebanon.



#### **A new office for A Rocha Lebanon**

It was one of those 'being in the right place at the right time' moments when Colin was speaking to one of our former colleagues at LSESD and mentioned we were looking to rent an office. Within a few days it was all arranged and, here we are! Just along the corridor from Colin's old office and still very convenient to our apartment. As you can see, it is a work in progress as we continue sorting ourselves out!



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