

HELP THEM LIVE



By Alvin Chew, Marine Environmental Specialist



WHAT IS A TURTLE

Turtle, reptile with a bony or leathery shell. Any shelled reptile can be called a turtle, but in North America people commonly use the word tortoise to designate members of a family of turtles that live entirely on land, reserving the word turtle for species that live in or near water.

The word terrapin, of Native American origin, is used in North America only for the diamond-backed terrapin, a turtle that lives in the brackish waters of eastern coastal marshes.

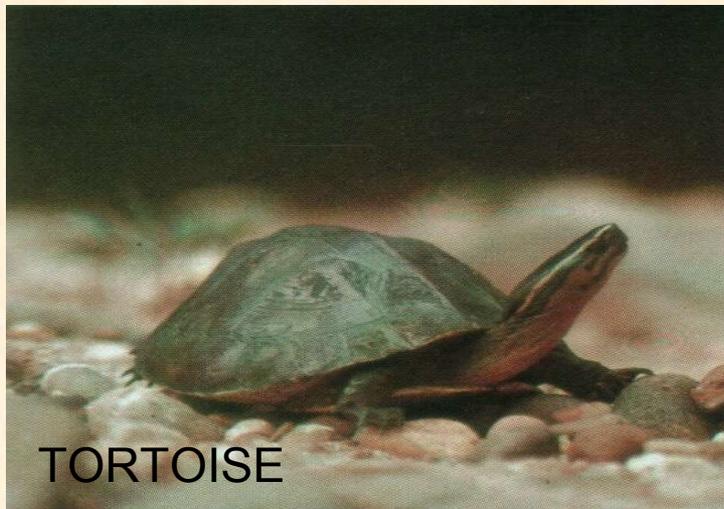
SPECIES WITHIN A SPECIE



SEA TURTLE



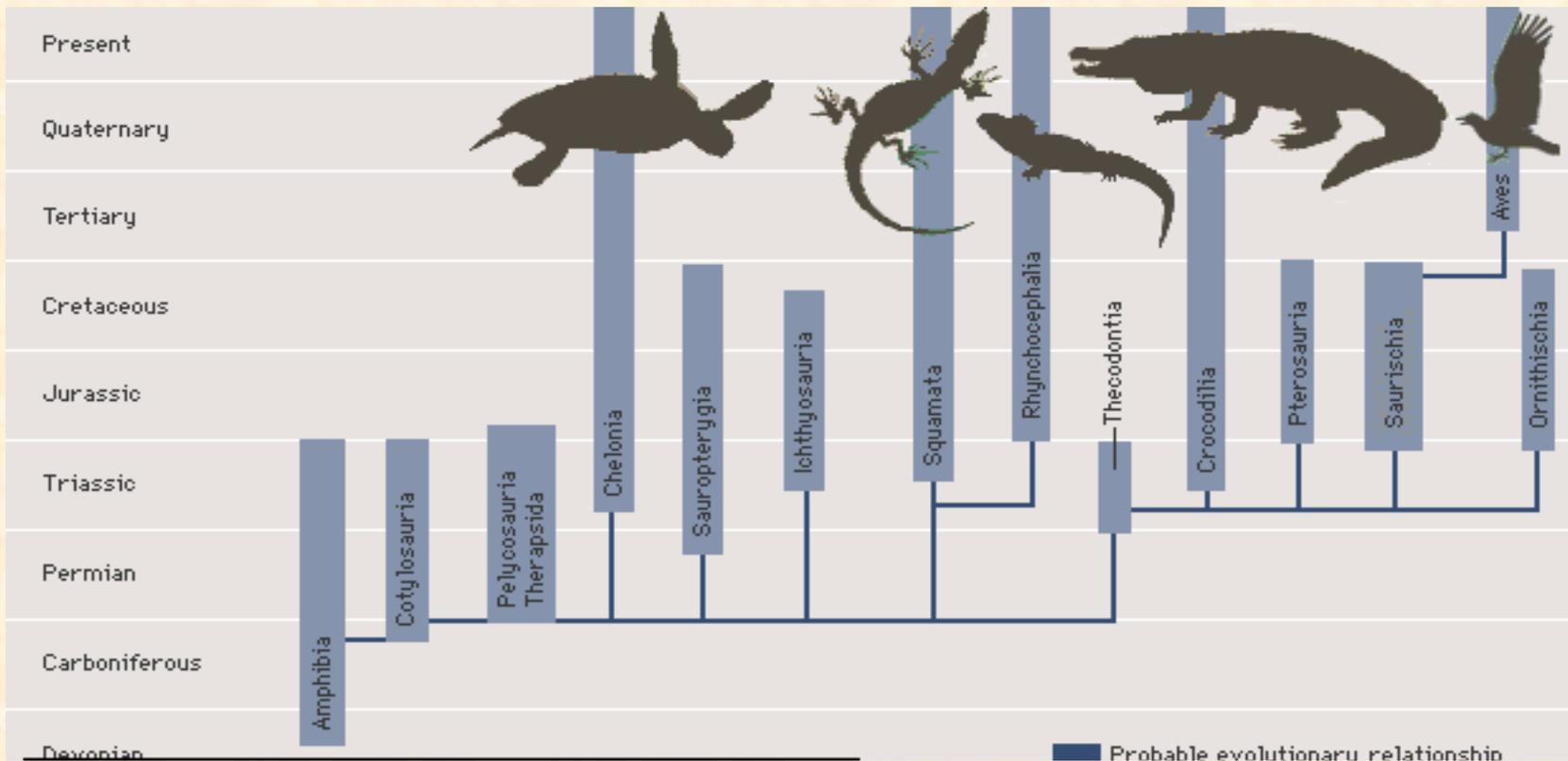
TERRAPIN



TORTOISE



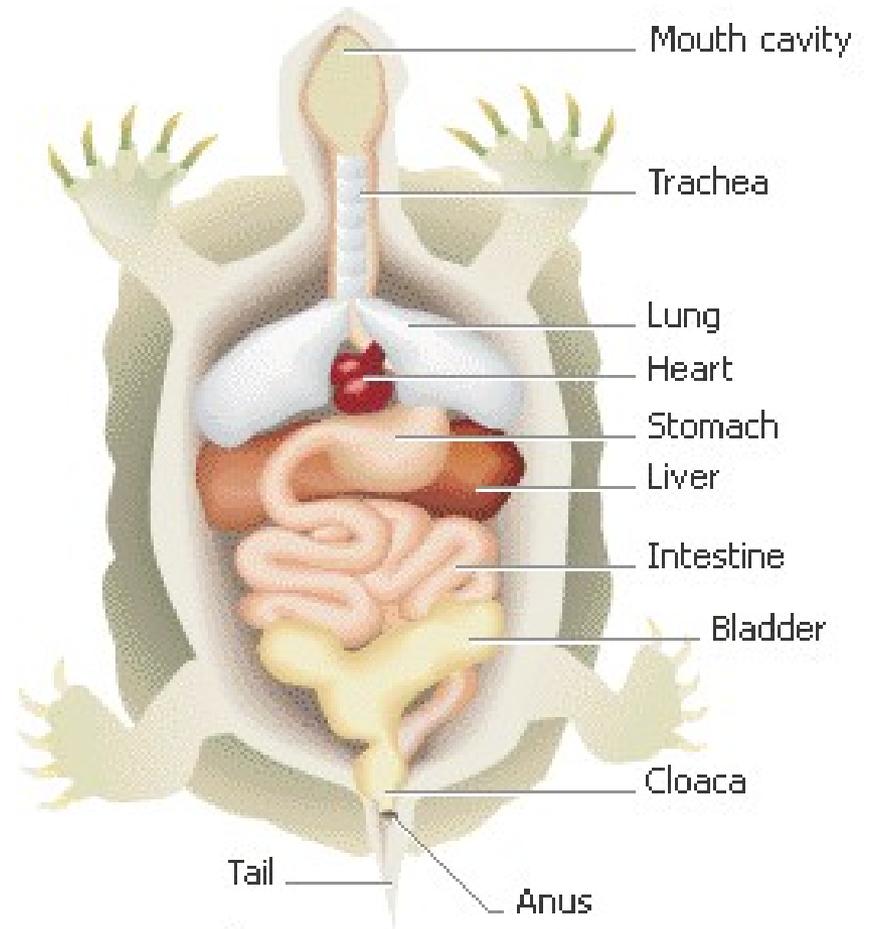
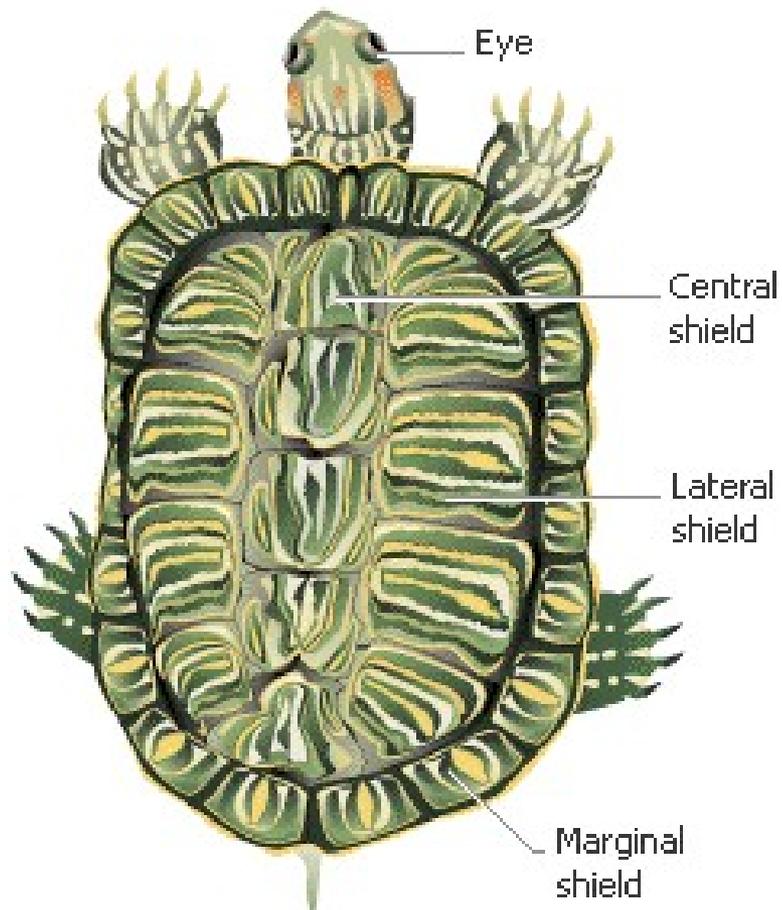
GIANT TORTOISE

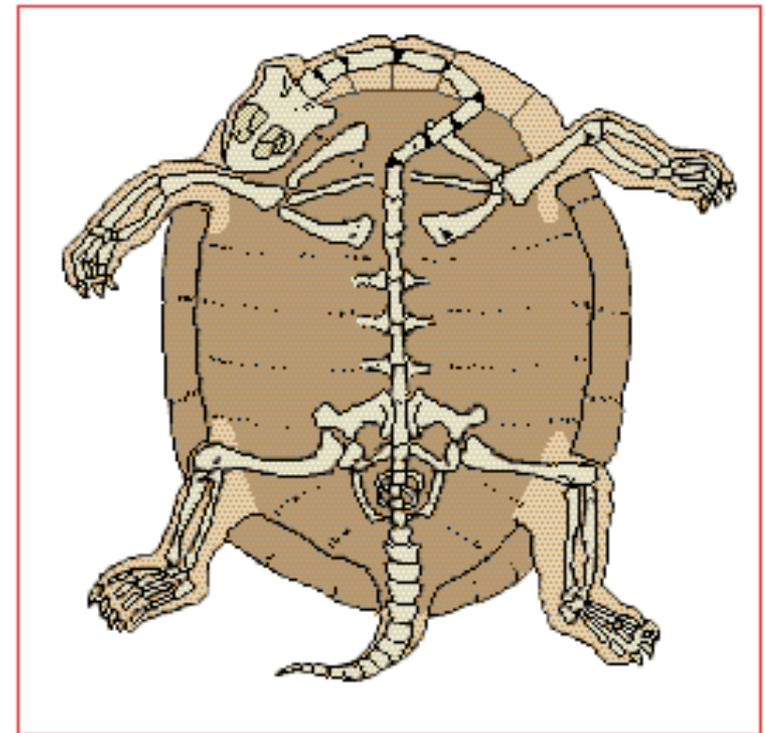
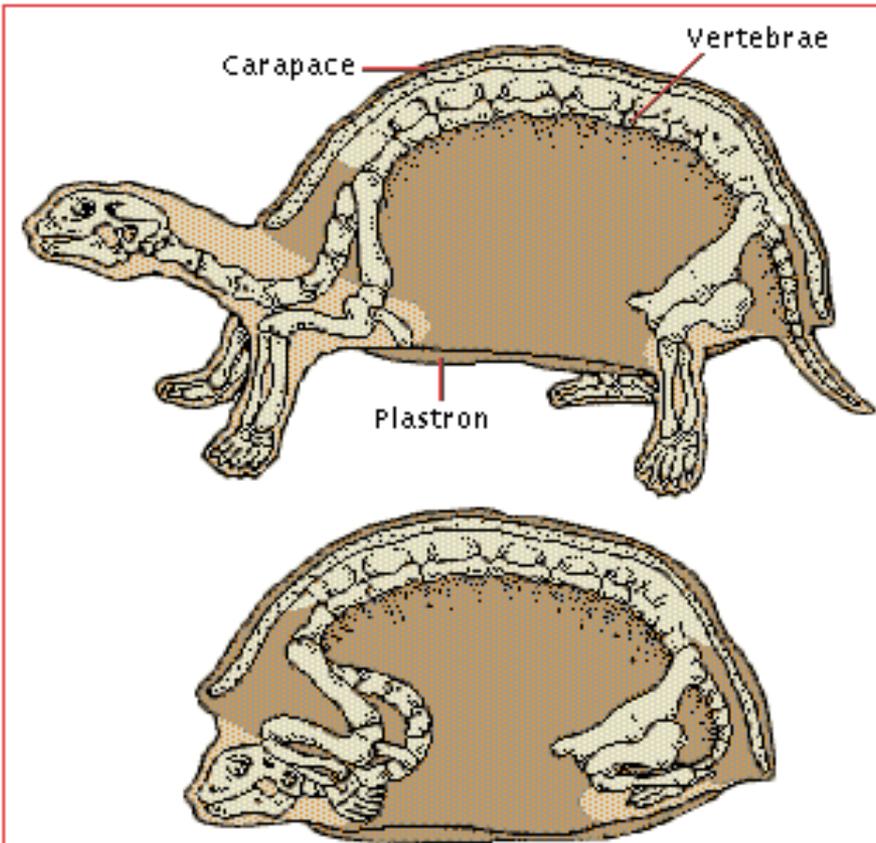


Turtles are ancient life forms that first appeared on Earth during the Triassic Period, which extended from about 240 million to 250 million years ago.

Turtles survived the disasters that wiped out the dinosaurs and many other creatures at the end of the Mesozoic Era about 65 million years ago. The earliest known fossil turtles were similar to the turtles that live today.

The earliest turtles had teeth, unlike today's turtles, which are toothless and use their sharp jaws to bite and handle food. Early turtles also had not yet evolved the ability to pull their heads into their shells.





Turtle Neck Retraction

Scientists recognize two categories of turtles and tortoises—hidden-necked and side-necked. Hidden-necked species pull their heads directly backwards so that the neck vertebrae curve into a U-shape, as shown on the bottom left. In contrast, side-necked turtles, shown on the right, snake their neck sideways to tuck their head under the shell.

OUT OF 30 SPECIES OF SEA TURTLES ONLY 8 REMAINS TODAY



Green turtle
Chelonia mydas
49 inches

Male

Female

Leatherback
Dermochelys coriacea
74 inches

Hawksbill
Eretmochelys imbricata
35 inches

Australian flatback
Natator depressus
39 inches

Black turtle
Chelonia agassizi
39 inches

Olive ridley
Lepidochelys olivacea
30 inches

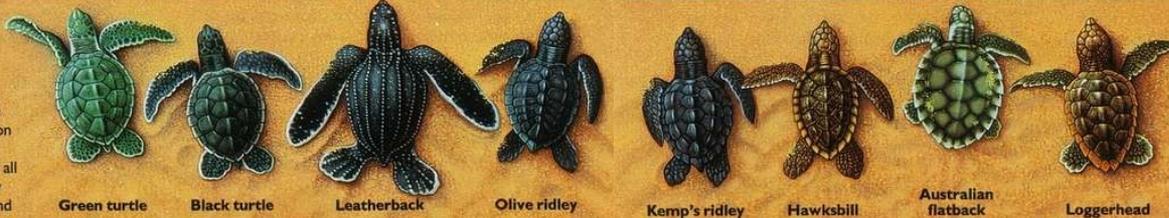
Kemp's ridley
Lepidochelys kempii
30 inches

Loggerhead
Caretta caretta
47 inches

MEASUREMENTS ARE MAXIMUM CARAPACE LENGTH

Ancient mariners

Sea turtles have roamed the oceans for at least 150 million years. Foraging for jellyfish, sponges, grasses, or crabs in all but the coldest waters, they nest on scattered tropical and



temperate shores. Males are most easily distinguished by long tails (top left), which help grasp the females during mating. Biologists are still trying to learn where hatchlings (left) grow up, when they mature, and how they navigate. One certainty: All species are at risk.

PAINTING BY BRADY BRADIS

4 TYPES OF SEA TURTLES FOUND IN MALAYSIA



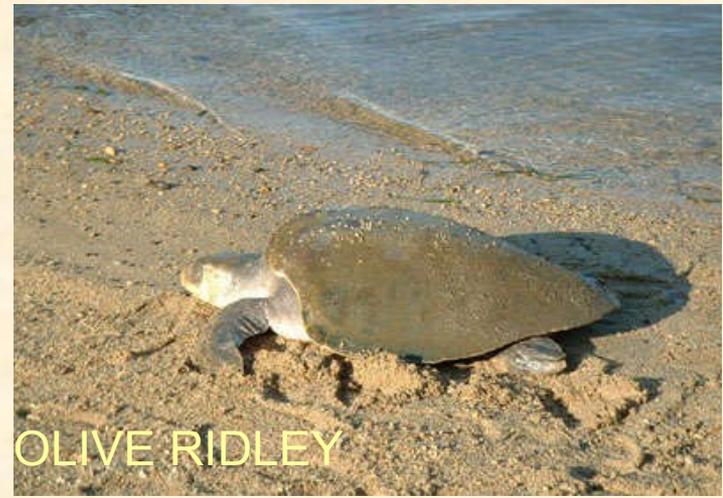
HAWKSBILL TURTLE



GREEN TURTLE



LEATHERBACK TURTLE



OLIVE RIDLEY

GREEN TURTLE



COMMON NAME	GREEN TURTLE
LOCAL NAME	AGAR
SCIENTIFIC NAME	CHELONIA MYDAS

**NESTING SEASON
APRIL - SEPTEMBER**

The Green Turtle is given its name due to the color of the body fats, which are green. However it has a dark brown or blackish body.

It has an average body size of about 1.2m in length. Its front swimming flippers have a single claw on each side.

The Green Turtle feeds on sea plants namely, the sea grass and seaweeds. It can lay an average of 100 to 140 eggs per nest and its round egg has a diameter of 5 cm.

HAWKSBILL TURTLE



The Hawksbill Turtle is easily recognizable due to the scale-like arrangement of its horny shell. It has an average body size and the jaw is shaped similar to that of an eagle beak. Its size seldom reaches beyond one meter in length. This turtle lives in shallow waters.

The Hawksbill feed mainly on sponges and soft corals which is easily found in the vicinity of coral reefs. It has a brown coloration with pale spots and stripes.

The Hawksbill can lay up to 130 eggs per nesting and the eggs has a size of about 5.0 cm in diameter.

COMMON NAME	HAWKSBILL
LOCAL NAME	KARAH
SCIENTIFIC NAME	ERETMOCHELYS IMBRICATA

**NESTING SEASON
MARCH - JUNE**

LEATHERBACK TURTLE



Leatherbacks are easily recognized by its distinctive shell that is marked by 7 longitudinal ridges. These distinctive ridges on the back resemble the star fruit (carambola).

Leatherbacks are the biggest among the turtles, giant leatherbacks reaches a shell length of 240 cm (96 in) and can weigh over 900 kg (2,000 lb).

It has a dark coloration with white spots. It is the only turtle with a particular jaw that resemble a pair of scissors. The Leatherbacks feed mainly on jelly fish and other soft marine lives.

The Leatherback turtle lays an average of 60 - 100 eggs in each nest. The eggs are round with a diameter of 5 cm to 6.5 cm.

COMMON NAME	LEATHERBACK
LOCAL NAME	BELIMBING
SCIENTIFIC NAME	DERMOCHELYS CORIACEA

**NESTING SEASON
MAY-AUGUST**

OLIVE RIDLEY



COMMON NAME	OLIVE RIDLEY
LOCAL NAME	LIPAS
SCIENTIFIC NAME	LEPIDOCHELYS OLIVACEA

NESTING SEASON

MARCH - JUNE

The Olive Ridley turtle is the smallest among all the turtles that come to Malaysia. It has an average length of 70 cm.

It has a dark coloration of the olive. Olive Ridleys feed mainly on crabs, shrimps and other small crustaceans.

Only the olive ridley and its Atlantic cousin, Kemp's ridley, stage arribadas. A strange phenomena where thousands of them will go up to the beach on Costa Rica to lay their eggs.

They can lay up to about 100 eggs per nesting. The eggs are round with a diameter of 4.0 cm

WHAT IS 'ARRIBADA'



On this rain-soaked October night possibly 30,000 olive ridley sea turtles were converging on a half mile of Pacific beach at Ostional, Costa Rica, in a biological extravaganza called la arribada—the arrival.

THREATS TO SEA TURTLES

- CONSUMPTION
- NEST DESTRUCTION
- INGESTION OF MARINE DEBRIS
- OIL & GAS EXPLORATION
- COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
- MYSTERIOUS TUMORS
- PREDATORS



HOW LONG DOES LITTER LAST IN THE SEA



The Sea is not a garbage can. It is where most of our food comes from. Would you want to eat from a garbage can?

BANANA SKIN

Up to 2 years

CIGARETTE BUTTS

1 – 5 years

PLASTIC BAGS

10 – 20 years

NYLON CLOTHING

30 – 40 years

LEATHER

Up to 50 years

TIN CANS

50 years

ALUMINUM CANS

80 – 100 years

GLASS BOTTLES

1 million years

PLASTIC BOTTLES

Indefinitely

HOW YOU CAN HELP

DO NOT EAT TURTLE EGGS OR TURTLE MEAT
DO NOT BUY SOUVENIRS MADE FROM TURTLES
DO NOT THROW RUBBISH INTO THE SEA
DO NOT WASTE ENERGY
HELP KEEP THE BEACH CLEAN

Your effort can ensure that these remarkable creatures survive, so future generations may also enjoy and benefit from them.

