

Florida Fishing Academy Sea Turtles 101 6-8

Sea Turtles 101

Did you know that Florida gets the most Sea Turtle nests in all of the United States? Though Sea Turtles live throughout the world with most nesting occurring in Oman, Saudi Arabia.

There are 7 types, or what we call "species," of Sea Turtles in the world. Three are common to Florida.

Let's explore them!

#1: Loggerhead Sea Turtle



The Loggerhead Sea Turtle is most known for their large head.

Loggerhead Sea Turtles have very powerful jaws which allow them to crush hard conch and crab shells.

The Loggerhead Sea Turtle is the most common type or "species" of sea turtle in Florida.

#2: Green Sea Turtle



The Green Sea Turtle is most known for being a vegetarian or herbivorous. Though young Green Sea Turtles also feed on crabs, jellyfish, sponge and more.

They don't look very green from the outside, but their inside fat has a green color to it!

You may remember this Sea Turtle from the movie Finding Nemo (Crush.)

#3: Leatherback Sea Turtle

Leatherback Sea Turtles are the largest of all Sea Turtles. They can be up to 7ft in length and over 2,000 pounds.

Not only are the adults the largest but their babies and even their eggs are larger than other sea turtles.

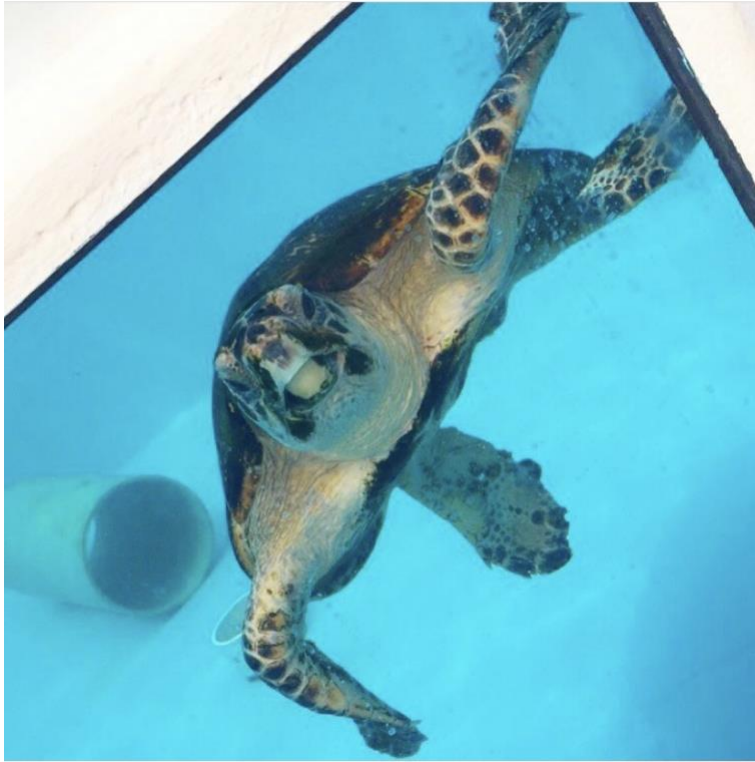
Leatherback Sea Turtles also have a flexible shell which allows them to dive deeper underwater.

Leatherback Sea Turtles are known to feed primarily on jellyfish. Adults Leatherbacks can eat twice their weight in jellyfish per day. They may cause issues due to the overwhelming amount of plastic in the ocean which is mistaken for food.



Other not as common species:

#4: Hawksbill Sea Turtle



Hawksbill Sea Turtles are less commonly found in Florida. They tend to prefer more tropical waters.

The Hawksbill gets its name from its pointy beak like mouth which allows it to eat its favorite food, sponge!

Hawksbills largest threat is their beautiful shell which is sought after to make jewelry and sunglasses.

#5: Kemps Ridley Sea Turtle



Kemps Ridley Sea Turtles are more commonly found nesting on beaches in Texas than in Florida.

Their diet is similar to that of a Loggerhead Sea Turtle.

One unique characteristic of Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtles is their nesting Arribadas where hundreds of female turtles come on to the beach at once to lay their eggs.



#6: Olive Ridley Sea Turtle

Olive Ridley Turtles rarely make their way to Florida as they prefer more tropical waters. (This picture was taken in Costa Rica)

Olive Ridley's are slightly smaller in shell and head size than a Kemp's Ridley but both turtles participate in nesting arribadas.

#7: Australian Flatback



Flatbacks are named for their abnormally shaped shells or carapace in relation to other sea turtles.

They are one of the only types of sea turtles that do not have an oceanic phase and live only in waters off of Australia, Papua New Guinea and Southern Indonesia.

What other threats do Sea Turtles face? Do some research about local and international efforts to protect these large marine animals.

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