

Sea Turtle Nesting Season

Sea turtles are graceful saltwater reptiles that spend most of their lives swimming in the world's oceans. Female sea turtles build nests and lay their eggs in a hole they dig on the beach. The most common sea turtle to nest in the southeastern United States is the loggerhead sea turtle. Each year females lay their eggs and thousands of sea turtles hatch along our beaches. The loggerhead is a threatened species which means that it is likely to become endangered and could become extinct. It is important to protect these reptiles and the beaches they use for nesting. Here is what you can do to help:

- Turn off your beachfront lights during nesting season.
- Do not disturb sea turtle nests which you find on the beach.
- Do not use flashlights or flash cameras on the beach at night.
- Throw away all of your trash. Sea turtles may eat it and die.
- If you see a turtle on the beach at night, stay away and keep quiet.
- Leave tracks left by sea turtles undisturbed. They are needed to locate nests.

For more information about sea turtles, please call the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at 904/232 2580.

Loggerhead Sea Turtle

The Living Dinosaur

■ Sea turtles are our link to dinosaurs. They first appeared about 200 million years ago when dinosaurs still roamed the earth. Sea turtles, the last of the ancient reptiles, are like living fossils.

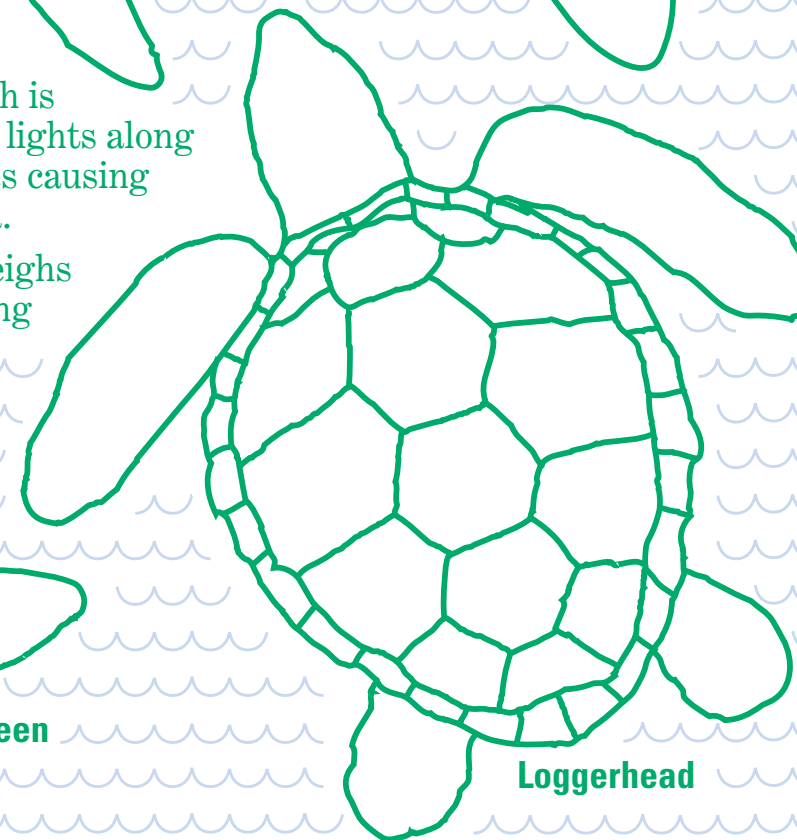
■ Adult female loggerheads lay their leathery ping-pong sized eggs on the beach. Females lay 100 to 126 eggs at a time. However, only a few young turtles will make it to adulthood.

■ Under natural conditions, hatchling sea turtles find their way to the ocean by moving toward the brightest, most open horizon which is over the ocean. But building lights and street lights along the shoreline may confuse the baby sea turtles causing them to head inland instead of toward the sea.

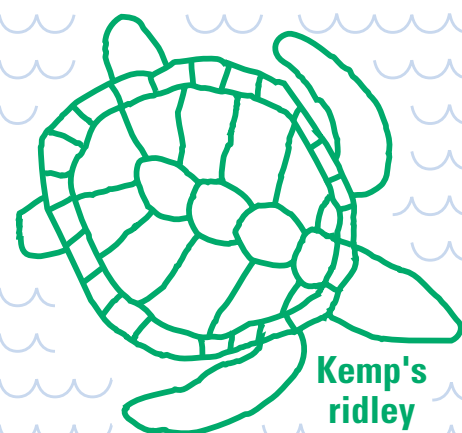
■ The adult loggerhead sea turtle usually weighs 175-350 pounds, baby sea turtles after hatching weigh only about one ounce.



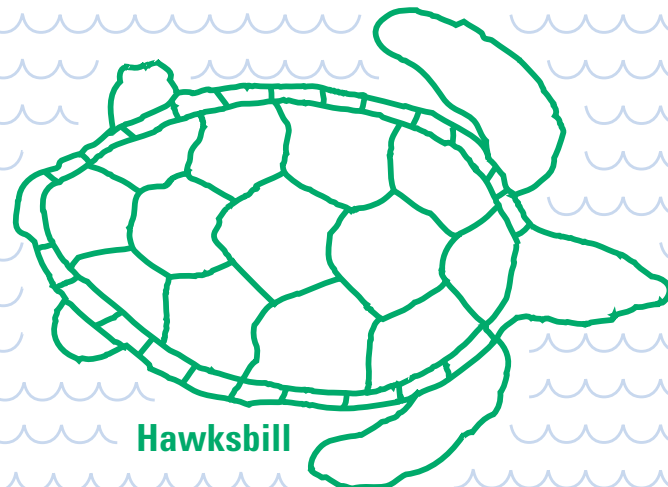
Leatherback



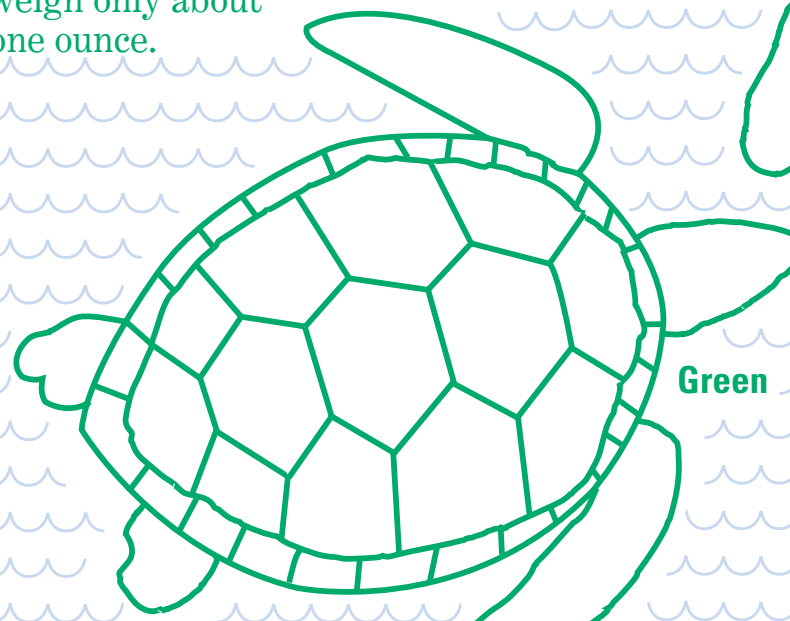
Loggerhead



Kemp's ridley

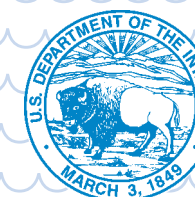


Hawksbill



Green

Turn over for games.



Loggerhead sea turtles are threatened.

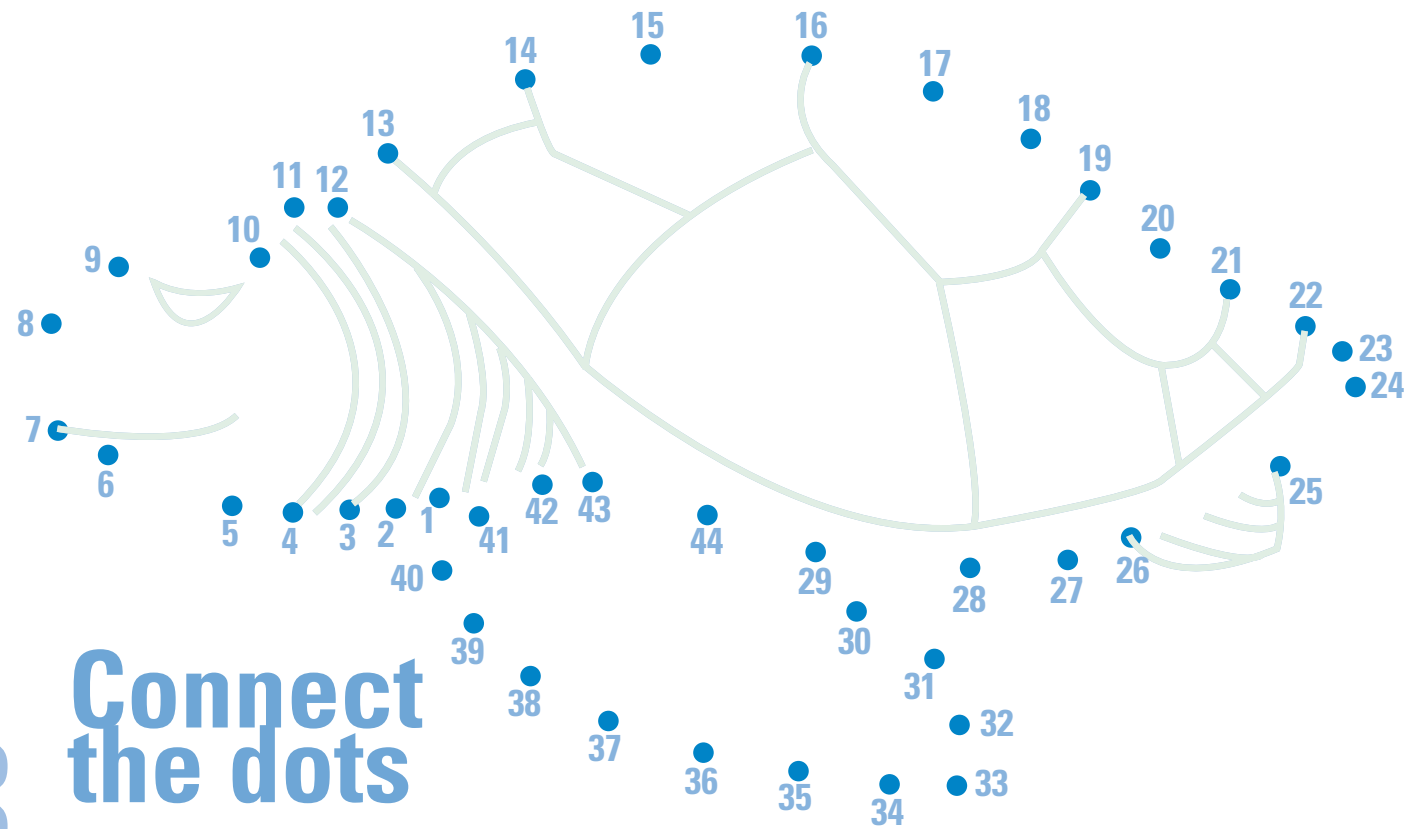
Loggerhead sea turtles are threatened.

Turtle Word Search

How many of the "turtle" words can you find?

- sea turtle • loggerhead
- flippers • reptile • sand
- beach • ping pong balls
- ocean • dinosaur • eggs

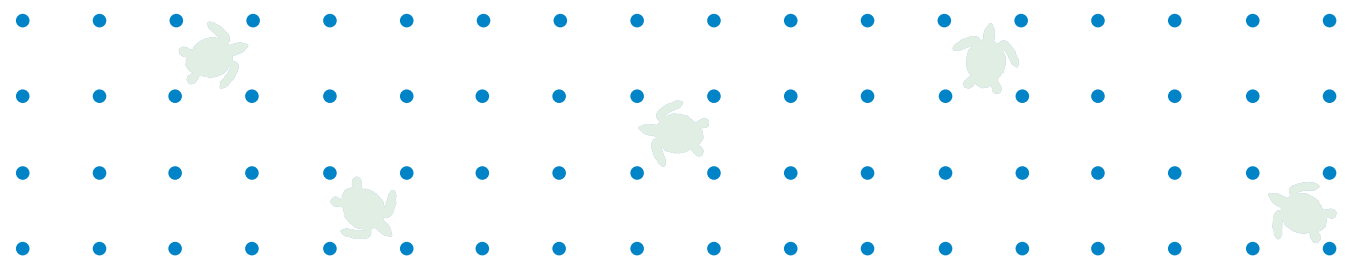
A	W	F	E	E	R	S	S	T	E	G	G	S	W
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P	Y	A	E	G	Y	L	R	A	A	A	Q	I	A
E	S	V	B	V	D	F	Z	S	E	N	L	D	A
R	S	E	H	C	A	E	B	J	E	U	I	L	E
W	F	X	J	C	G	N	S	S	R	I	G	E	S



Connect the dots

How many turtles can you rescue?

Players take turns connecting 2 dots.
 Lines go across or down, not diagonally.
 Complete as many small squares as you can.
 Initial each square you complete and take another turn.
 Squares in which turtles are rescued count 5 points.
 All other squares count 1 point.



Which Way to the Ocean?

When loggerhead sea turtles hatch, they immediately head to the ocean. The male sea turtles spend the rest of their lives in the ocean, the females only come out to nest on the same beach where they were born. Can you help the baby sea turtle find its way to the ocean?

