Sea or marine turtles have outlived almost all of the prehistoric animals. Marine turtles were around during the time of the dinosaurs and are still present in the world’s oceans today.

On today’s Kid Scoop page, meet these incredible creatures!

Kinds of Sea Turtles

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service there are seven kinds of sea turtles: hawksbill, green, loggerhead, flatback, Kemp’s ridley, olive ridley, and leatherback.

One way to tell one type of sea turtle from another is to look at the pattern of scutes, or plates, on their shells.

NOTE: Unlike other species of sea turtle, the leatherback does not have scales.

Sea turtles are reptiles and they both have shells. One way they are different is that a sea turtle cannot retract its limbs or its head like a land turtle can.

Find the differences between these two turtles.

Turtle Travels

Sea turtles are long-distance travelers. Some species travel hundreds, even thousands of miles, from their feeding grounds to their nesting grounds. The adult females return faithfully to the island where they hatched.

The breeding grounds for the Pacific population of loggerhead turtles are limited to a few beaches in southern Japan, but adults are known to migrate incredible distances in order to feed. One turtle tagged in Japan was found feeding off the coast of Baja, Mexico, a distance of over 7,500 miles (12,000 kilometers). Loggerheads have been sighted from Chile all the way north to Alaska.

Life Science: The sequential stages of life cycles are different for different animals.

The leatherback is the largest sea turtle. It can grow to be about 6 feet (1.8 meters) long and weigh as much as 1,400 pounds (637 kilograms). How much is 1,400 pounds? Add up the numbers on each of the animals. The animals with even sums weigh about 1,400 pounds. The others weigh less.

The leatherback does not have scales.

Adult sea turtles are captured to lay their eggs on the same beach where they hatched. The baby sea turtle faced incredible dangers. Entire populations have been almost completely wiped out due to threats like hunters, habitat destruction, pollution, and introduced predators.

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The Leatherback

Sea turtles are reptiles and they both have shells. One way they are different is that a sea turtle cannot retract its limbs or its head like a land turtle can.

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