

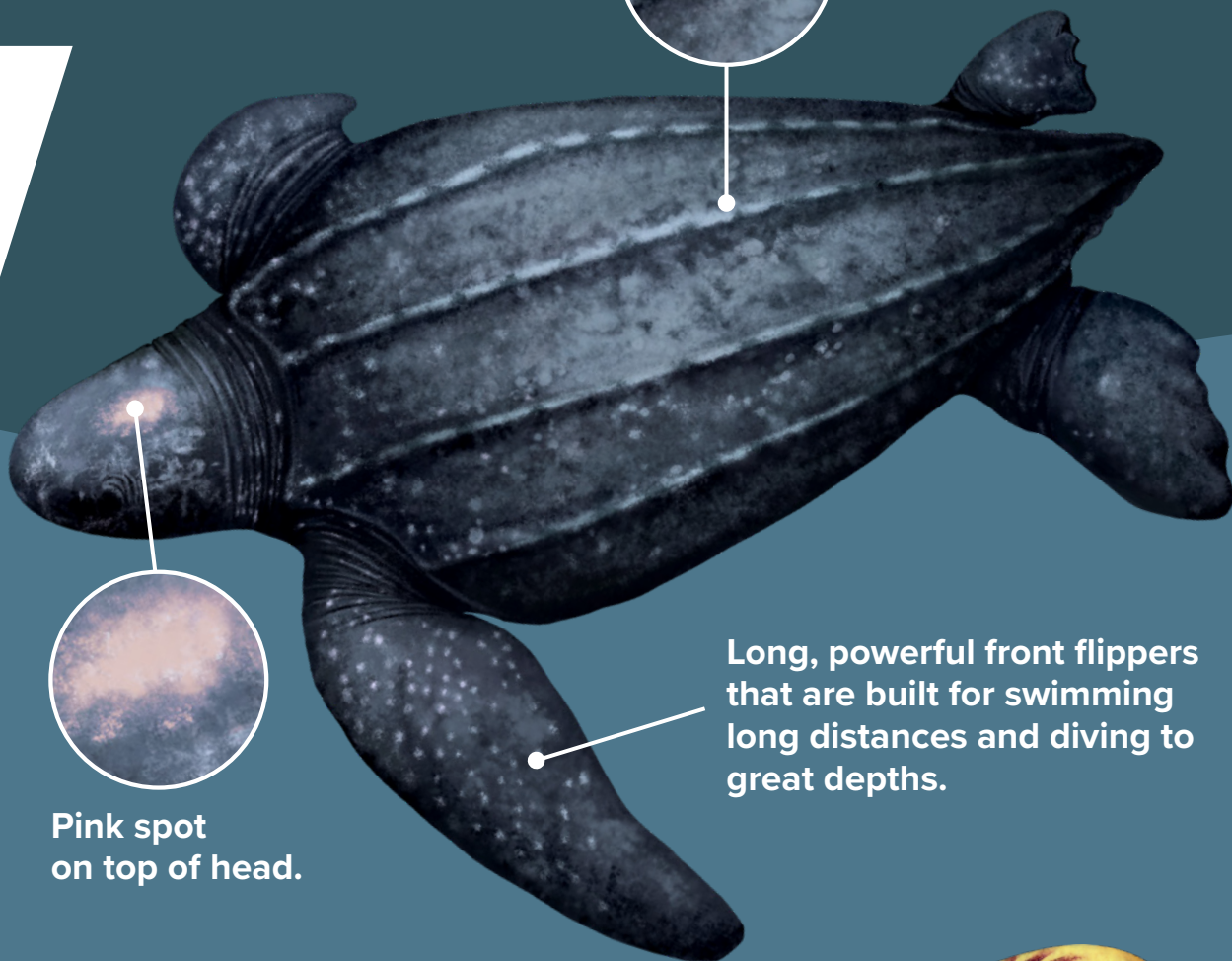
Leatherback Sea Turtle

They have a leathery carapace or protective covering unlike the hard shells of other sea turtles.

Seven unique ridges running the length of their back (carapace).

QUICK FACTS

- Listed as Endangered under the *Species at Risk Act*.
- Weigh up to 640 kg.
- Carapace length up to 1.75 meters.
- Females lay about 80 eggs per nest.



Where Leatherback Sea Turtles are commonly found



HABITAT

Leatherback Sea Turtles can be found in the Atlantic Ocean between the warm waters off Central and South America, the Caribbean, and Florida in the winter, and the temperate waters off the coast of Atlantic Canada in the late spring through fall.

Pink spot on top of head.

Long, powerful front flippers that are built for swimming long distances and diving to great depths.

DIET

While in Atlantic Canadian waters Leatherbacks love to eat jellyfish, eating more than their body weight in a single day.



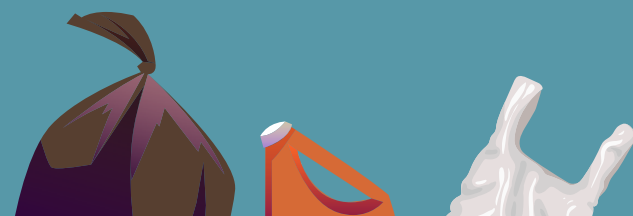
LIFECYCLE

- Females come ashore on southern beaches every 2-3 years to lay eggs.
- They dig a deep nest cavity with their flippers, lay about 80 eggs, cover them up, and return to the sea.
- About 60 days later, the eggs hatch and the hatchlings climb out of the nest and head for the ocean.
- Many will be eaten by predators before they ever reach the water!
- Juvenile turtles spend the next years of their life travelling the ocean in seaweed beds and on ocean currents.
- Once Leatherbacks reach maturity they spend the rest of their lives migrating between breeding and feeding areas.



THREATS

- Accidental entanglement and drowning in fishing gear
- Poaching
- Beachfront lighting
- Shoreline erosion
- Development



One way you can help to protect sea turtles is by using less plastic. Plastic can resemble jellyfish and Leatherbacks might mistake it for food.

REPORTING

If you see a Leatherback Sea Turtle, please report the sighting to Canadian Sea Turtle Network
Phone: 1 888 729-4667 Web: seaturtle.ca



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada

Ingenium
Canada's Museums of Science and Innovation
Musées des sciences et de l'innovation du Canada