

Turtles Love the Beach, Too

Text and image provided courtesy of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.



a sea turtle

Did you know that sea turtles return to the same beach where they were born to lay their eggs? Their babies are then born on that beach. When those babies get old enough to lay eggs, they go back to the same beach!

In Hawaii, there are two types of sea turtles. The green sea turtle is named for the color of its body. The hawksbill sea turtle is named for its nose, which is shaped like a bird's beak. Both types of sea turtles spend most of their time in the water. They also spend a big part of their lives near the islands of Hawaii.

Green sea turtles are threatened. That means there are fewer green sea turtles now than in the past. People are worried about them. If too many green sea turtles die, they will become endangered. Once animals are endangered, they may become extinct. No more of them would be alive on the Earth. Hawksbill sea turtles are endangered. Groups of people in Hawaii are trying to save the hawksbill sea turtles and protect the green sea turtles.

One way people are helping these sea turtles is with laws. There are laws that protect all sea turtles. People used to hunt both green and hawksbill sea turtles for food and for their beautiful shells. The shells were used to make jewelry. The jewelry might have been pretty,

but the shells look much better on the sea turtles! Now, it is illegal to hunt them or sell jewelry made with their shells.

People are also trying to help baby sea turtles stay safe. Hawksbill sea turtles lay their eggs at the edge of the beach where plants grow. When the baby turtles hatch, they try to go to the water. But sometimes, trash washes up on the beach and gets caught in the plants. The trash gets in the way of the baby turtles. They are too young to know to go around it. Sometimes, baby hawksbill turtles get caught in the trash and die before they can reach the water.

Groups of people are watching beaches for signs of turtle nests. People put up small fences to keep the eggs safe from animals that try to eat turtle eggs. The people also clean up the trash to help the baby turtles find a safe path to the water.

Scientists who study turtles believe these actions will help more baby turtles live long enough to have their own babies. Since people caused some of the problems for turtles, many people want to find more ways to help them live.

These conservation efforts are supported by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), which specializes in bringing together individuals, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and corporations to restore our nation's fish, wildlife, plants, and habitats for current and future generations.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What are the two types of sea turtles in Hawaii?

- A. leatherback sea turtle and loggerhead sea turtle
- B. Kemp's ridley sea turtle and green sea turtle
- C. hawksbill sea turtle and leatherback sea turtle
- D. green sea turtles and hawksbill sea turtles

2. How does the author contrast the number of green sea turtles with the number of hawksbill sea turtles?

- A. Green sea turtles are threatened, but hawksbill sea turtles are endangered.
- B. Green sea turtles are extinct, but hawksbill sea turtles are threatened.
- C. Green sea turtles are endangered, but hawksbill sea turtles are threatened.
- D. Green sea turtles are threatened, but hawksbill sea turtles are extinct.

3. Read the following sentences from the text.

“One way people are helping these sea turtles is with laws. There are laws that protect all sea turtles...

Groups of people are watching beaches for signs of turtle nests. People put up small fences to keep the eggs safe from animals that try to eat turtle eggs. The people also clean up the trash to help the baby turtles find a safe path to the water.”

What can you conclude based on this information?

- A. Most people don't care about protecting sea turtles.
- B. The best way to protect sea turtles is to not do anything.
- C. People are only trying to pass more laws to protect sea turtles.
- D. People are trying many different ways to protect sea turtles.

4. What is one danger facing baby sea turtles?

- A. trash on beaches
- B. other sea turtles
- C. seaweed
- D. coral reefs

5. What is the main idea of this text?

- A. Hawksbill sea turtles are named for their noses, which are shaped like birds' beaks, and they spend most of their time in the water.
- B. Green sea turtles and hawksbill sea turtles are two types of sea turtles from Hawaii, and people in Hawaii are trying to protect these two animals.
- C. One way people in Hawaii are trying to protect sea turtles is by passing laws that make it illegal to hunt sea turtles.
- D. Sea turtles return to the same beach where they were born to lay their eggs, but sometimes baby sea turtles need extra protection.