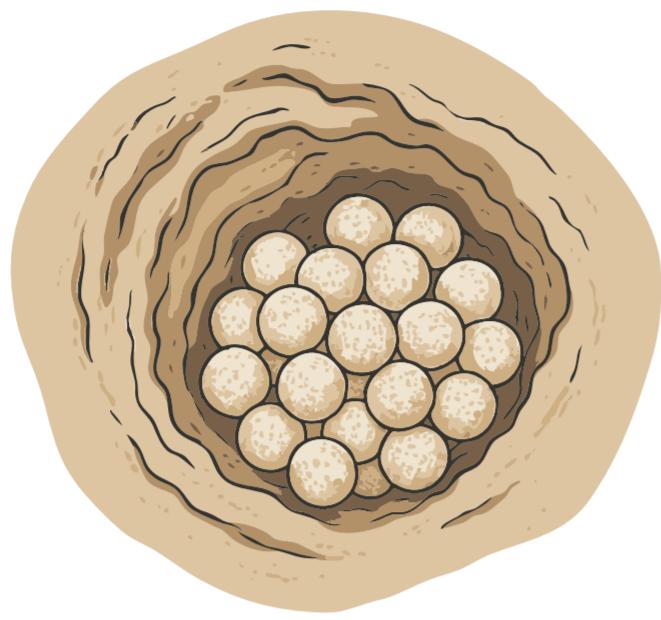


# LIFE CYCLE OF A SEA TURTLE



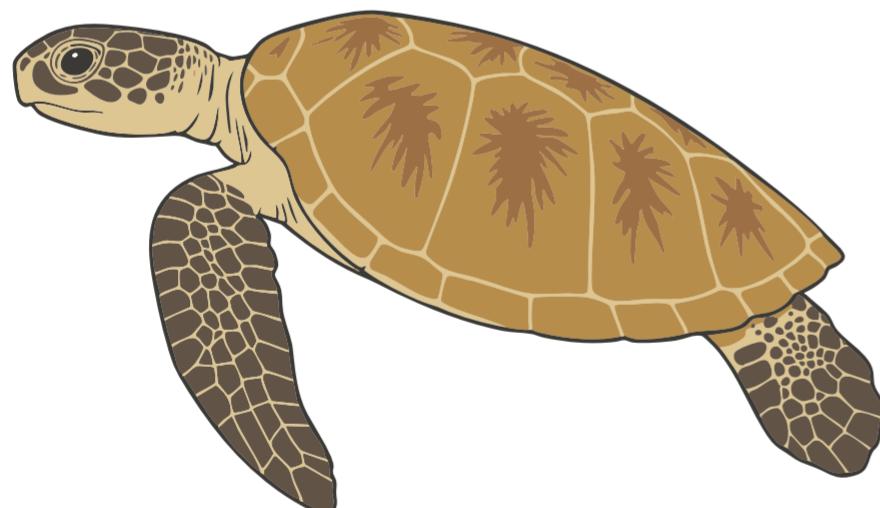
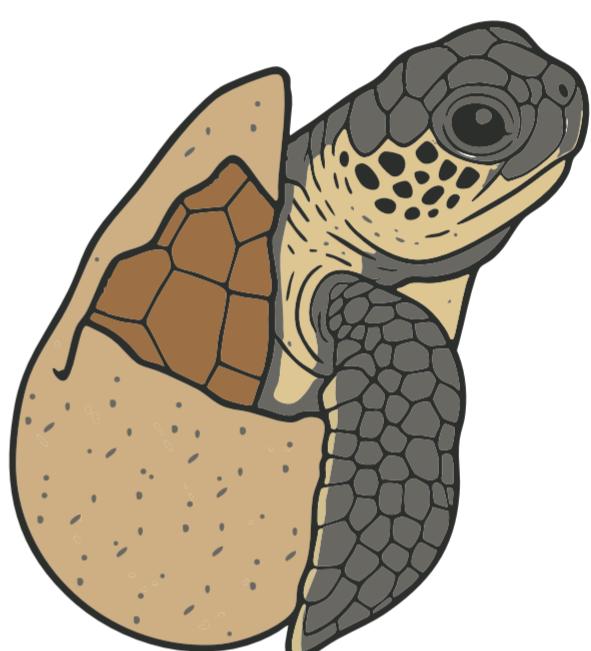
## Eggs

Female sea turtles return to the beach where they were born to lay eggs. This is called natal homing. One nest can have about 100 to 125 eggs. The eggs hatch after about two months, and the temperature of the sand decides whether the hatchlings (baby turtles) will be male or female.

Warmer sand = more females. Cooler sand = more males.

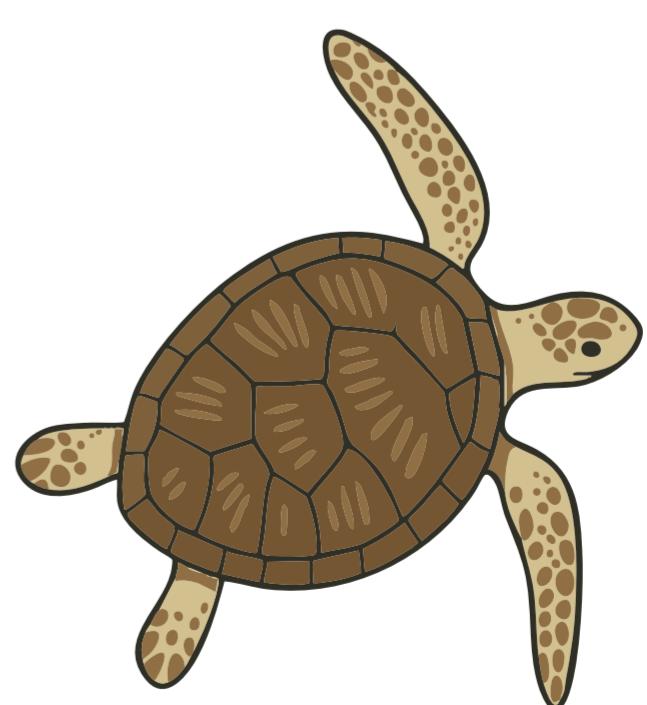
## Hatchlings

Hatchlings use a special egg tooth, called a caruncle, to break free from their shells. Once out, they instinctively head toward the ocean, usually guided by the natural light of the horizon. Sadly, it's estimated that only about 1 in 1000 hatchlings will survive to become adults.



## Juveniles

Juveniles experience a lost years phase, drifting in ocean currents and often hiding in floating seaweed for food and shelter. This phase can last several years.



## Adults

Sea turtles reach maturity between about 10 and 50 years old. They migrate long distances between feeding and nesting sites. Females can nest several times during a nesting season, which usually occurs every 2 to 4 years.