

Sea turtles: lesson 1 of 3

Meet the pawikan

Five kinds of sea turtle live in
Philippine waters



Green turtle at Apo Island. Photo: MCP

Pawikan

In the Philippines, sea turtles are called pawikan. They are reptiles, like lizards and snakes, but they spend almost their whole lives at sea.

7

kinds of sea turtle in the world

5

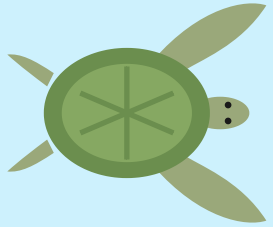
of them live in Philippine waters

3

of those lay their eggs on Philippine beaches

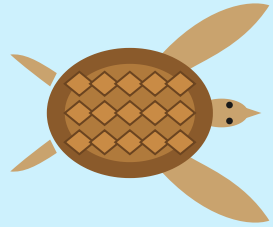


Meet the five



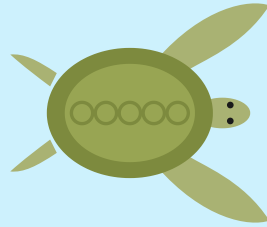
Green turtle

Nests on Philippine beaches



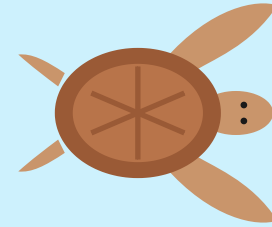
Hawksbill turtle

Nests on Philippine beaches



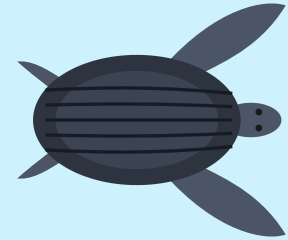
Olive ridley

Nests on Philippine beaches



Loggerhead turtle

Visits to feed. Nests in Japan



Leatherback turtle

Visits to feed. Nests in Malaysia and Indonesia



Meet the five

Green turtle

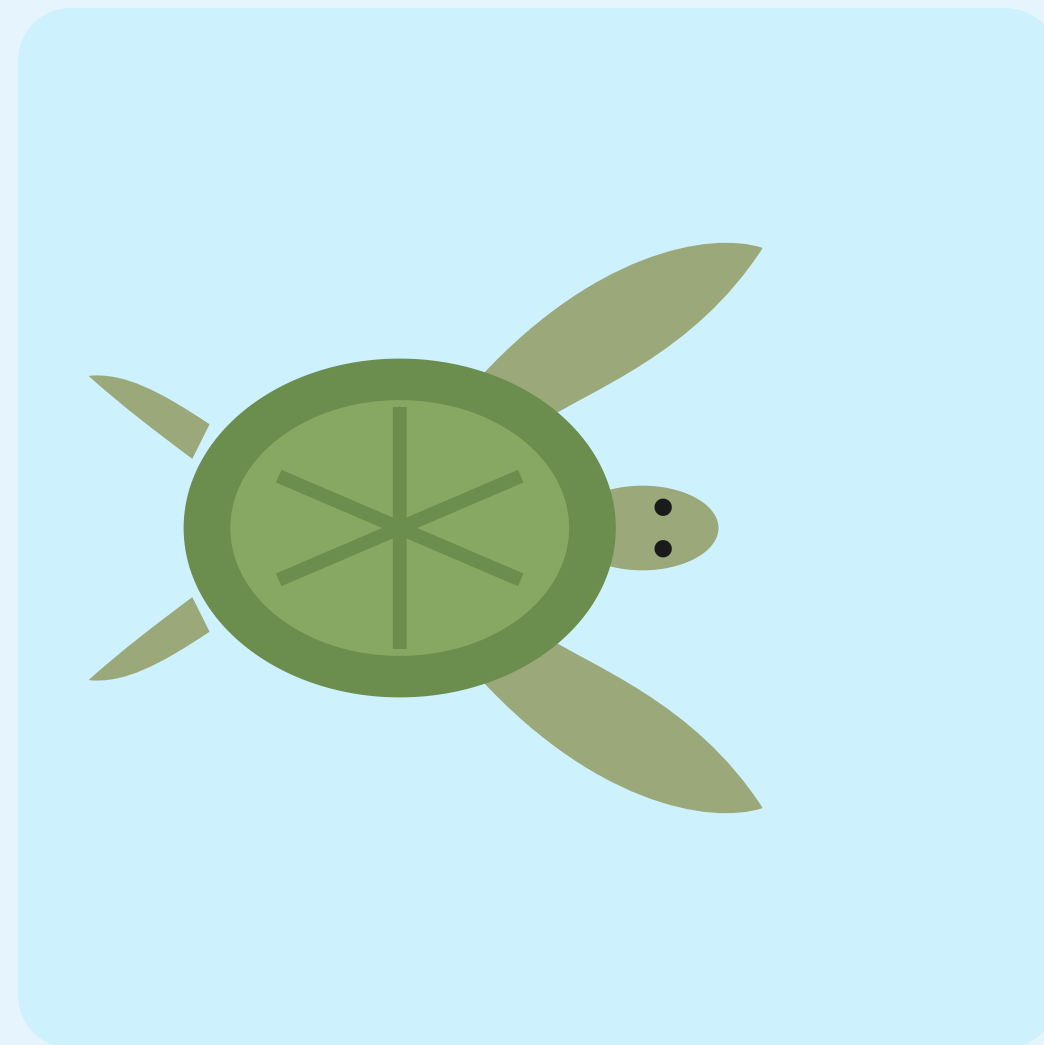
A round, smooth shell and a small head.
Named for the green fat under its shell.

Eats: Seagrass and algae

In the Philippines: Nests on Philippine beaches

Red List status

Least Concern



How we know: IUCN Red List. DENR Pawikan Conservation Project.



Meet the five

Hawksbill turtle

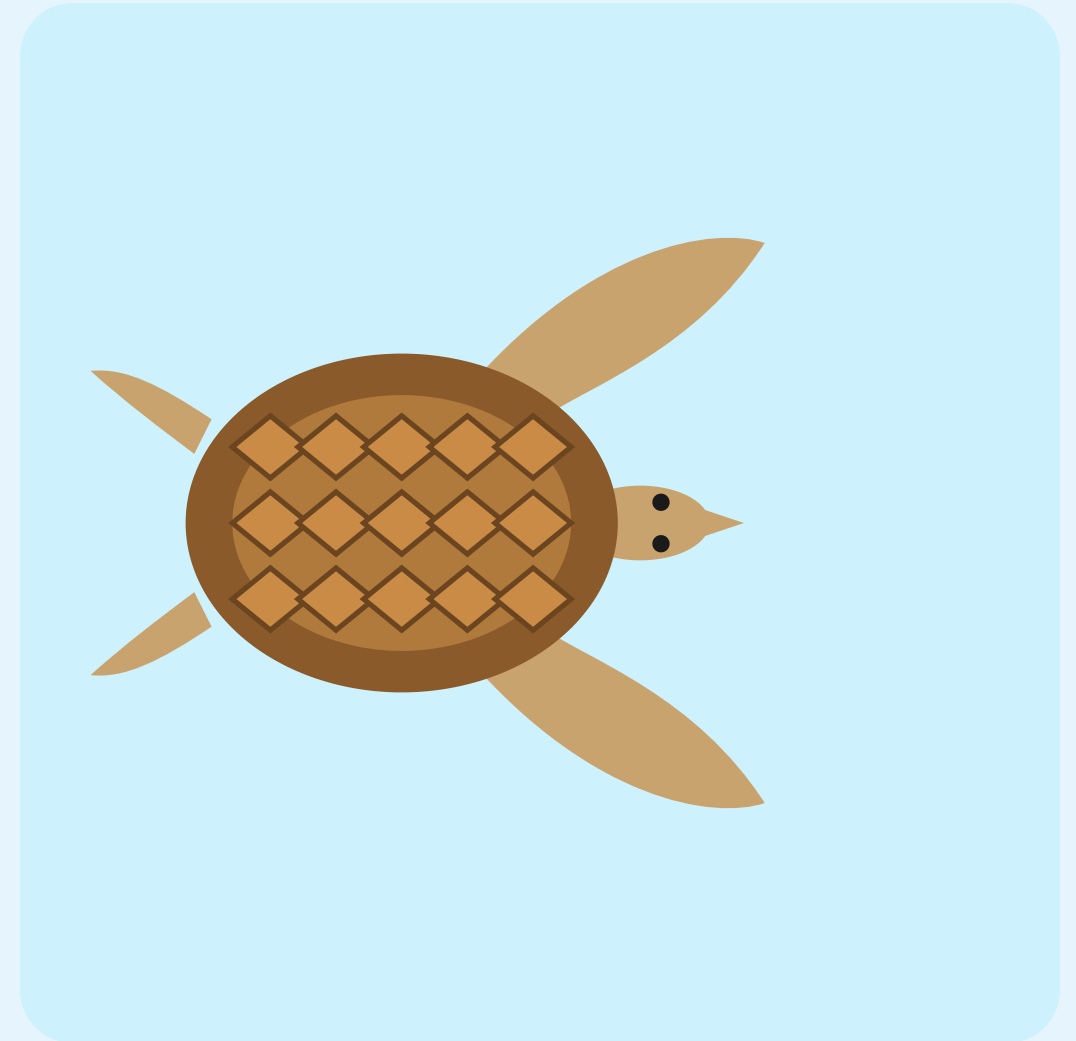
A narrow, pointed beak like a bird, and overlapping shell plates.

Eats: Sponges

In the Philippines: Nests on Philippine beaches

Red List status

Critically Endangered



How we know: IUCN Red List. DENR Pawikan Conservation Project.



Meet the five

Olive ridley

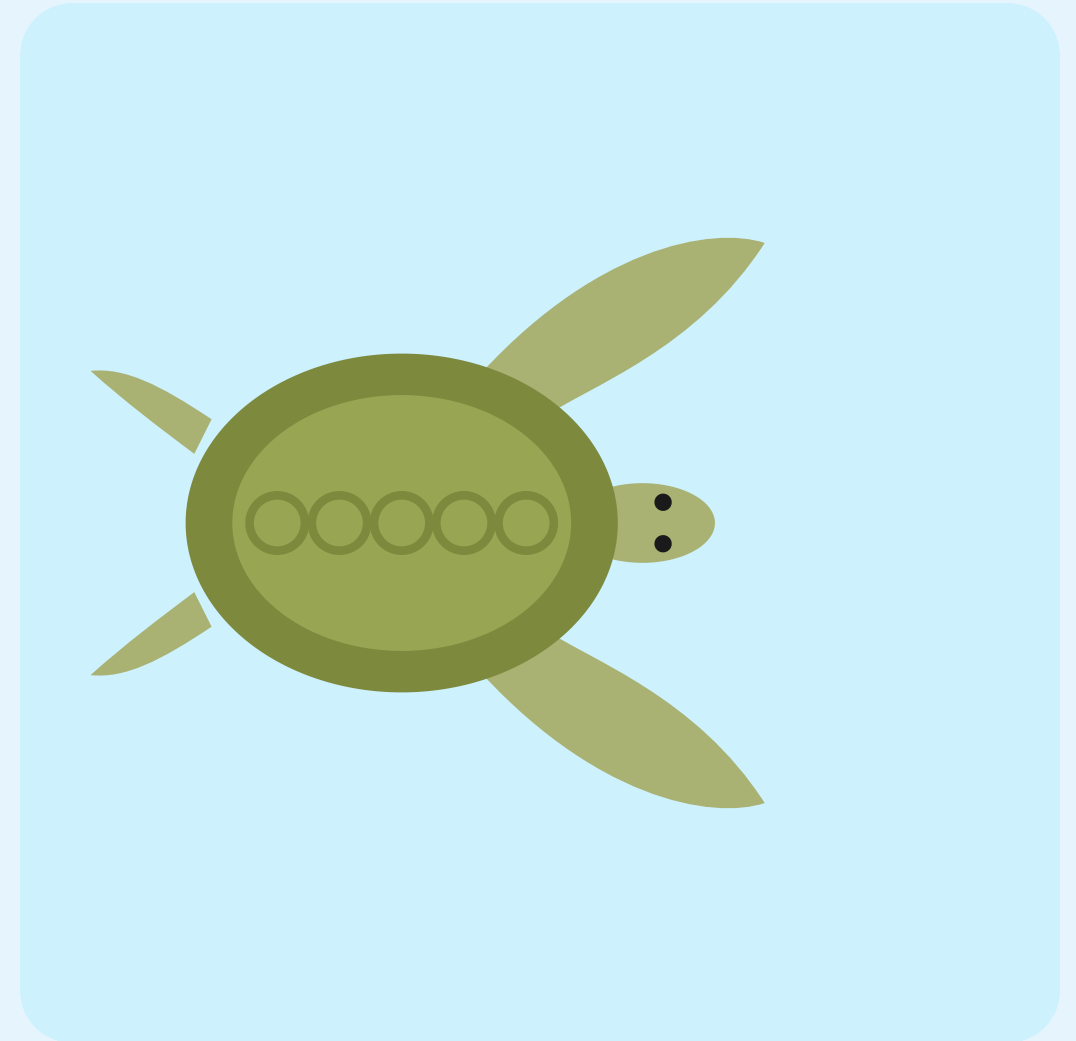
The smallest of the five. A round, olive-green shell.

Eats: Crabs, shrimp, jellyfish and algae

In the Philippines: Nests on Philippine beaches

Red List status

Vulnerable



How we know: IUCN Red List. DENR Pawikan Conservation Project.



Meet the five

Loggerhead turtle

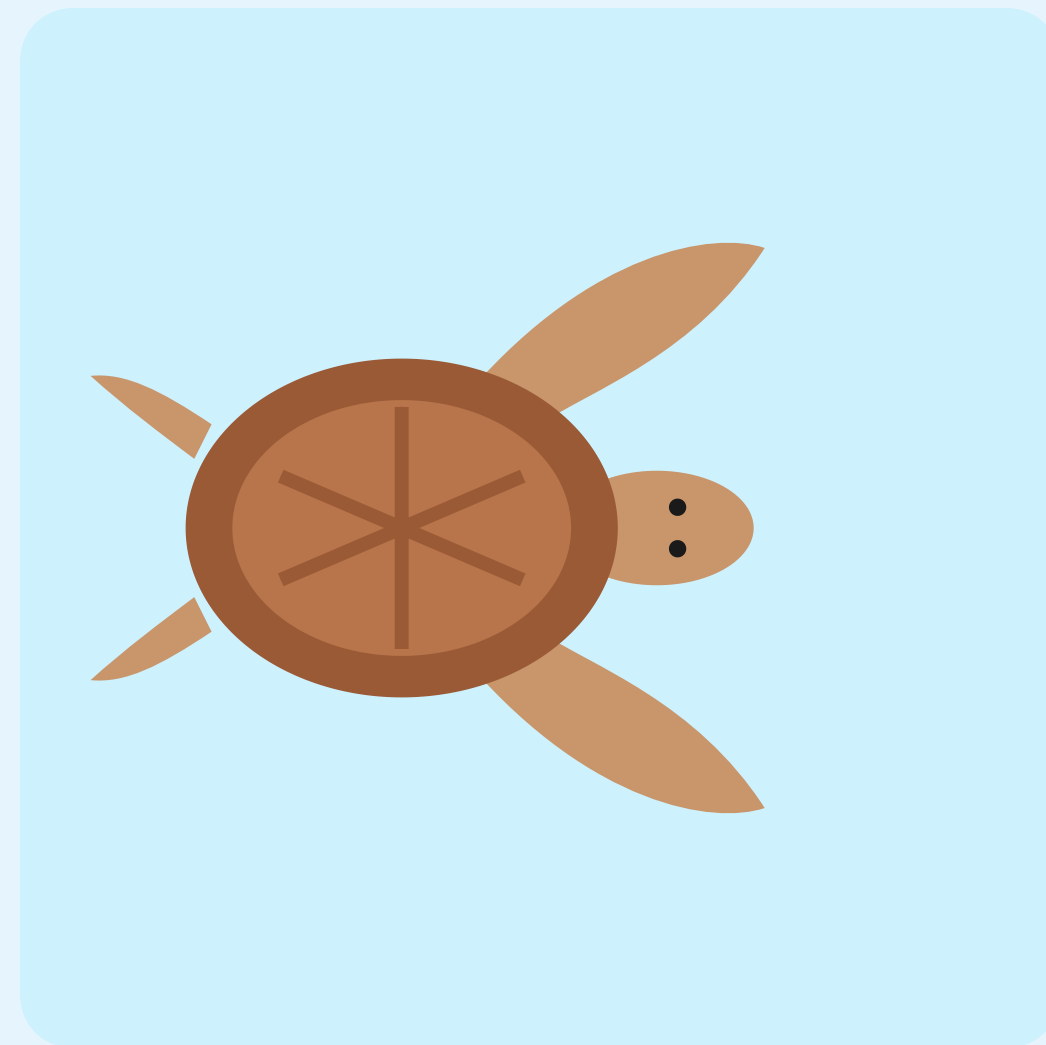
A very big head with strong jaws for crushing shells.

Eats: Crabs, clams and sea snails

In the Philippines: Visits to feed. Nests in Japan

Red List status

Vulnerable



How we know: IUCN Red List. DENR Pawikan Conservation Project.



Meet the five

Leatherback turtle

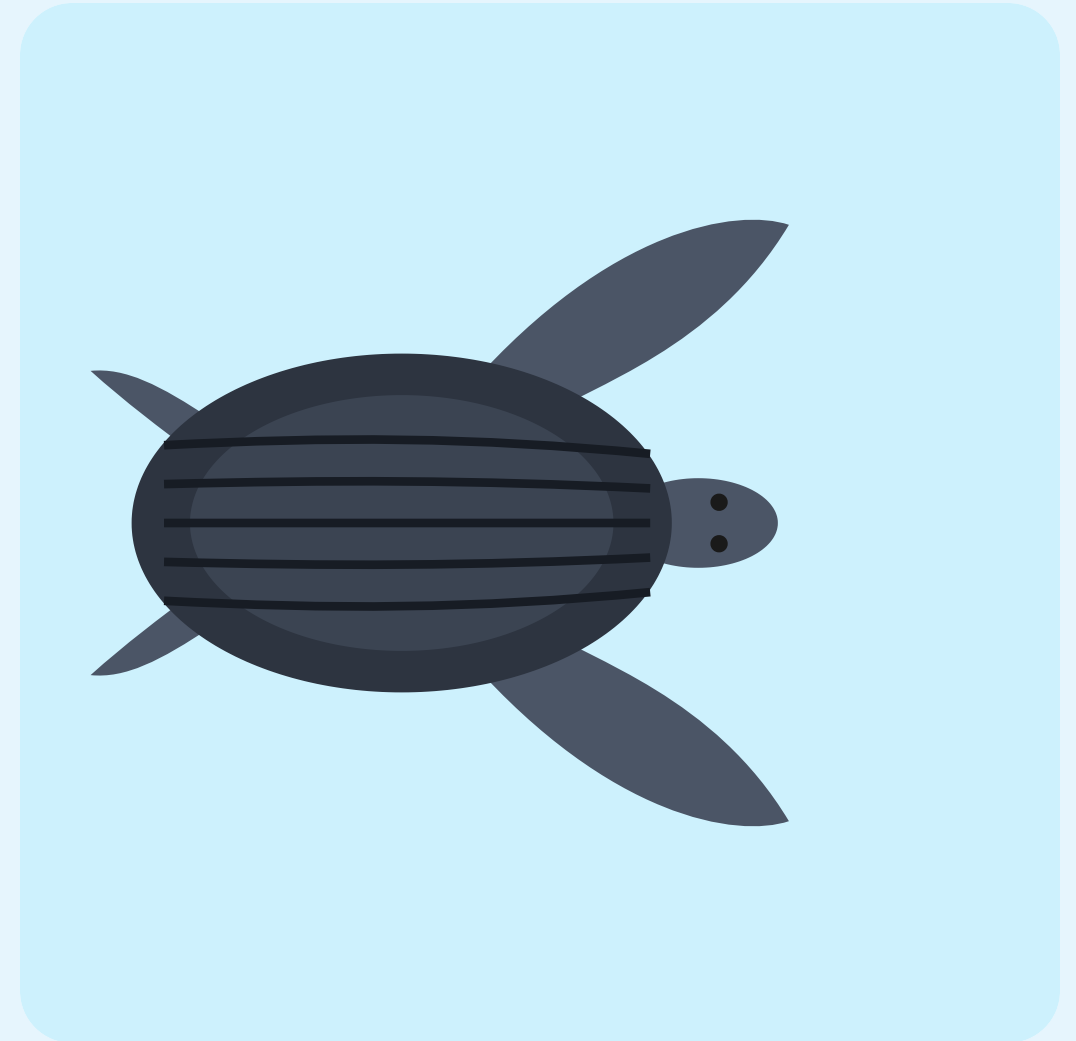
The biggest turtle of all. Its shell is leathery, with ridges, not hard plates.

Eats: Jellyfish

In the Philippines: Visits to feed. Nests in Malaysia and Indonesia

Red List status

Vulnerable



How we know: IUCN Red List. DENR Pawikan Conservation Project.

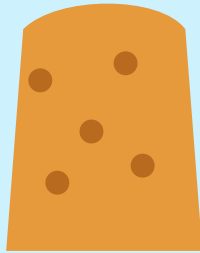


Match the turtle to its food

Look at each turtle's head and mouth. Which food is each one built for? Draw lines on your worksheet.



Seagrass



Sponges



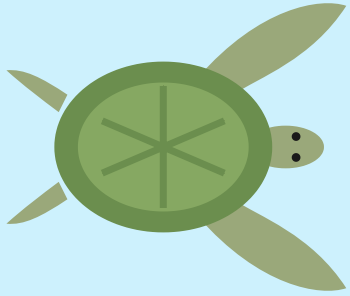
Jellyfish



Crabs and clams

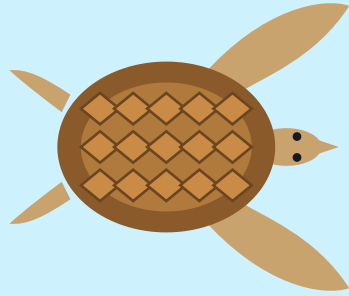


Built for their food



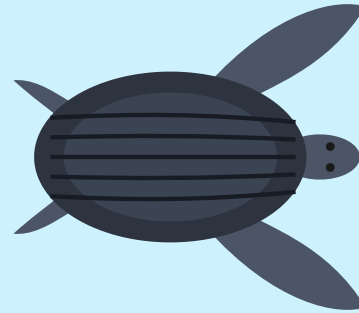
Green turtle: **seagrass**

Saw-edged jaws for grazing, like a lawnmower.



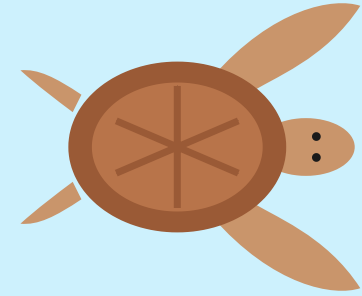
Hawksbill: sponges

A narrow beak to reach into cracks in the reef.



Leatherback: **jellyfish**

Spines in its throat stop slippery jellyfish sliding back out.



Loggerhead: crabs and clams

A huge head with strong muscles to crush shells.



Talk about it

Which pawikan would you most like to see, and why?

Why do you think the hawksbill is the most endangered?

How could a plastic bag trick a leatherback?

Next time: the life of a turtle



Photos and sources

Photos: green turtle by MCP at Apo Island. Turtle drawings made for this lesson. All illustrations drawn for this lesson by Marine Conservation Philippines.

Sources:

- CMS IOSEA (2011). Philippines national report on marine turtles.
- IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
- Maritime Review. Marine turtles of the Philippines.

Full links are in the teacher reading. Free to use and share for education. Made by Marine Conservation Philippines. More free lessons: marineconservationphilippines.org/resources/teachers-resources/

