



Meet the pawikan

Lesson plan: the five sea turtle species of the Philippines, how to tell them apart, and how each is built for its food



Ages	8 to 11 (grades 3 to 6)
Time	45 to 60 minutes
Group	Up to 35 students
Where	Any classroom. No internet needed.
You need	The slides, one set of species cards per group and one food match worksheet per student

What students learn

- Sea turtles are reptiles that live almost all their lives at sea, and five of the seven species live in Philippine waters.
- How to recognise each species from its shell, head and size.
- How each turtle's mouth is adapted to its food.
- Every species is protected, and some are in serious danger.

Before the lesson

1. Print and cut out one set of **species cards** per group, and one **food match** worksheet per student.

The lesson

- 1** Pawikan **5 minutes, slides 1 and 2**. Ask who has seen a turtle in the sea. Explain that turtles are reptiles that breathe air.
- 2** Meet the five **20 minutes, slides 3 to 8**. Show each species. Groups find the matching card and read it together.
- 3** Food match **12 minutes, slides 9 and 10**. Students do the worksheet, then check with the answer slide.
- 4** Wrap up **5 minutes, slide 11**. Discuss one or two questions.

Answers and what to listen for

Food match answers: green turtle to seagrass, hawksbill to sponges, leatherback to jellyfish, loggerhead to crabs and clams.

Making it easier or harder

- **Younger groups:** focus on the green turtle and hawksbill only.

- **Older groups:** ask students to research the flatback and Kemp's ridley, the two species not found in the Philippines, and where they live instead.
- **Language:** sea turtle is *pawikan* in Filipino. Ask students for local names they know.

Curriculum links

- **Science:** living things, adaptations, habitats.
- **Ocean Literacy Principle 5:** the ocean supports a great diversity of life and ecosystems.

The teacher reading has the science behind every slide, with links to the sources.

Free to use and share for education. Made by Marine Conservation Philippines. More free lessons:
marineconservationphilippines.org/resources/teachers-resources/ Photo by MCP. Updated September 2026.