

Sea Turtles

Directions:

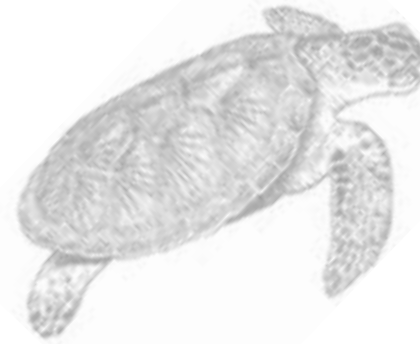
Read the following story to learn about sea turtles. The words in black capital letters are hidden in the wordfind. Can you find them? Good Luck!

SEA TURTLES have roamed the earth's **OCEANS** and seas for millions of years. Sea turtles are **REPTILES**, so they are **COLD-BLOODED**, have a backbone and **SCALES**, **BREATHE** air and lay **EGGS**. Adult females are the only sea turtles to ever leave the sea, and then it is only to lay their eggs. After at least 10 years at sea, females return to nest at the same **BEACH** where they hatched. They crawl from the ocean, dig a hole in the loose sand with their hind **FLIPPERS**, lay their eggs, and carefully cover their nests with sand before heading back to the ocean. When the eggs hatch, the baby turtles, called **HATCHLINGS**, rush to the water and out to sea. Scientists think baby sea turtles may remember or "imprint" on the particular smell, chemical make-up, or magnetic location of the beach where they hatched.

There are five species of sea turtles listed as endangered or threatened in Texas, including the **LOGGERHEAD**, **GREEN**, **ATLANTIC HAWKSBILL**, **KEMP'S RIDLEY** and **LEATHERBACK**. The Kemp's Ridley is the sea turtle most often found in the **GULF OF MEXICO** off the Texas coast. Females return every 1-2 years to a beach at **RANCHO NUEVO**, Mexico to nest. In 1947, there were as many as 40,000 Kemp's Ridleys seen nesting in one day. Today, scientists estimate that there are less than 1000 adult females nesting in an entire season.

Kemp's Ridley hatchlings eat **PLANKTON**, **JELLYFISH**, shrimp, and crabs. Adults eat mostly **CRABS**, but also eat jellyfish, clams and other **MOLLUSKS**. Adult turtles can reach 28 inches in length and weigh 75 to 100 lbs. Those that survive to adulthood may live 30 years or more.

All sea turtles are protected by **INTERNATIONAL** laws. The governments of **MEXICO** and the United States are working together to save the Kemp's Ridleys. One way to do this is by protecting the nesting beach from people who want to dig up the eggs or kill the turtles for food. Another way is to reduce the dangers faced by turtles in the ocean. A major danger in the ocean is the drowning of turtles in shrimp **NETS**. Sea turtles trapped in shrimp nets soon drown because they can't surface to breathe. The people who fish for shrimp are required by law to modify their nets with **TEDS** (Turtle Excluder Devices) so that trapped sea turtles may escape. Another danger is from **TRASH** that ends up in the ocean. Sea turtles sometimes die from eating trash, especially **PLASTIC** bags, which they mistake for jellyfish.



O C E A N S E D C H R F P L A N K T O N V T G B Y F
Q O A Z W S X C R A B S H N G U J M I K O L P A Q L
I L A Y J B T G T T V S F R U C D D E X S W Z T U I
N D H N E U E J M C I C K O L L P Q W E R T Y L I P
T B O P L A D S D H F A G H F I J K L Z X S C A V P
E L B N L M S P L L O L K I O M J U N H Y E B N G E
R O T V Y F R C D I E E X S F W Z A Q M N A B T V R
N O C X F Z L K J N H S G F M D S A P O I T U I Y S
A D T R I E W L O G G E R H E A D Q M N B U V C C X
T E Z L S K J H G S F D S A X P O I U Y T R R H E W
I D Q P H L O I K U J M Y H I N T G B R F T V A E D
O C W S X A Q Z P L O M K I C M J U N H Y L B W G T
N V F R A N C H O N U E V O O R C D E T X E S K W Z
A A Q P O L M K J I U X N B H G Y T V R C S F S D R
L E X Z S A W Q P O L I M K J I B R E A T H E B U N
B H G Y T P L A S T I C V C F D R E X S Z S A I W Q
R E P T I L E S Q W A O S Z X E R D F H C G V L T Y
G H B N U I J M K L O P Q W A S Z X E R D R K L M L
B G Y K E M P S R I D L E Y F V N E T S T E H C P O
N L E A T H E R B A C K I U J P O L M K B E A C H J
M O L L U S K S I U N R D E G G S F C V T N Y G H B
A E S D F Q W Z G H J X L B K C V P N R U O I Y M T

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WORDFIND

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