

## SEA TURTLE HANDLING AND RESUSCITATION REQUIREMENTS

**IF YOU ENCOUNTER AN ENTANGLED, INJURED OR UNRESPONSIVE SEA TURTLE,**  
please immediately call the National Marine Fisheries Service Northeast Region Hotline:  
**866-755-NOAA (6622)**

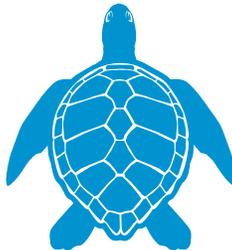


Any sea turtle taken incidentally during fishing must be handled with care to prevent injury, observed for activity, and returned to the water according to the following procedures:

**A** A SEA TURTLE THAT IS ACTIVELY MOVING OR IS DEAD (THAT IS, IF MUSCLES ARE STIFF AND/OR THE FLESH HAS BEGUN TO ROT) MUST BE RELEASED OVER THE VESSEL'S STERN ONLY:

- When fishing gear is not in use,
- When the engine is in neutral, and
- In areas where the turtle is unlikely to be recaptured or injured by vessels.

OTHERWISE, YOU MUST CONSIDER THE TURTLE UNRESPONSIVE AND ATTEMPT RESUSCITATION AS DESCRIBED IN **B**.



You are strongly encouraged to read the full regulation, which can be found at 50 CFR 223.206(d)(1).

**B** YOU MUST ATTEMPT RESUSCITATION ON SEA TURTLES THAT ARE UNRESPONSIVE AS FOLLOWS:

**1** Place the turtle top shell up\* and elevate its hindquarters at least 6" (or 15-30°) for at least 4 hours and up to 24 hours.

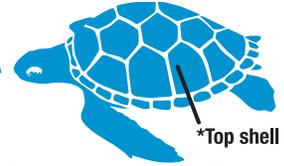
- The amount of elevation depends on the turtle's size; larger turtles require greater elevation.
- In warm weather (over 60 °F), keep the turtle shaded and moist, preferably by placing a damp towel over the head, shell, and flippers. You must NOT place the turtle into a container of water.

**2** Periodically rock the turtle gently side to side by holding the outer edge of the shell and lifting one side about 3", then alternate to the other side.

**3** Periodically gently touch the eye and pinch the tail (reflex tests) to see if there is a response.

**C** IF THE TURTLE REVIVES AND BECOMES ACTIVE DURING RESUSCITATION EFFORTS, you must release it over the vessel's stern as described in **A**.

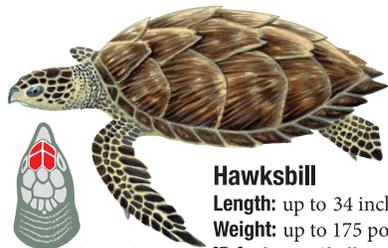
If the turtle does not respond to the reflex test (as described in **B 3**) or move within 4 hours (up to 24 hours, if possible), you must return the turtle to the water in the same manner.



# SEA TURTLES OF THE UNITED STATES ATLANTIC COAST

Text color corresponds to identification feature in diagram.

3 Feet



## Hawksbill

**Length:** up to 34 inches

**Weight:** up to 175 pounds

**ID features:** Shell oval, mottled brown. Scutes overlapping.

- **Four costal scutes on each side.**
- **First costal scute does not touch nuchal scute.**
- **Two pairs of prefrontal scales.**



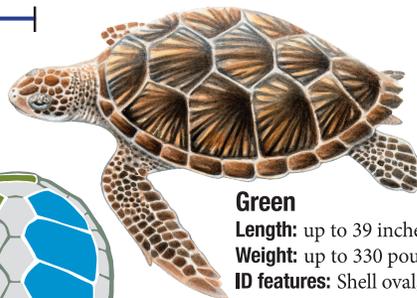
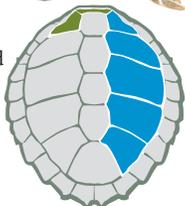
## Kemp's ridley

**Length:** up to 26 inches

**Weight:** up to 110 pounds

**ID features:** Shell round, gray.

- **Five costal scutes on each side.**
- **First costal scute touches nuchal scute.**
- **Two pairs of prefrontal scales.**



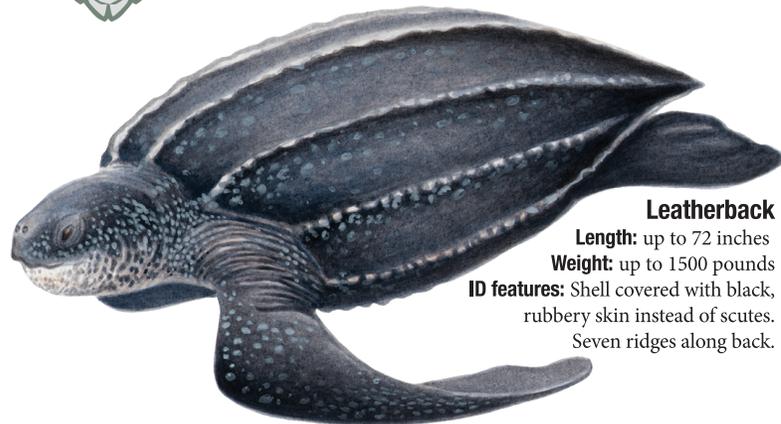
## Green

**Length:** up to 39 inches

**Weight:** up to 330 pounds

**ID features:** Shell oval, brown with streaks. Small, rounded head. Serrated beak (mouth) edges.

- **Four costal scutes on each side.**
- **First costal scute does not touch nuchal scute.**
- **One pair of prefrontal scales.**

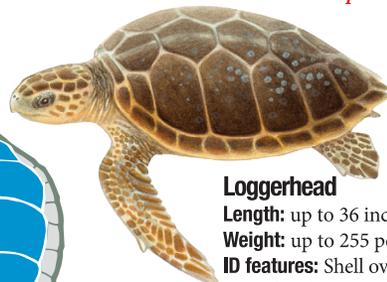
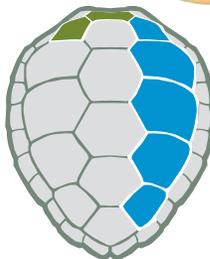


## Leatherback

**Length:** up to 72 inches

**Weight:** up to 1500 pounds

**ID features:** Shell covered with black, rubbery skin instead of scutes. Seven ridges along back.



## Loggerhead

**Length:** up to 36 inches

**Weight:** up to 255 pounds

**ID features:** Shell oval, reddish-brown. Large head.

- **Five costal scutes on each side.**
- **First costal scute touches nuchal scute.**
- **Two pairs of prefrontal scales.**