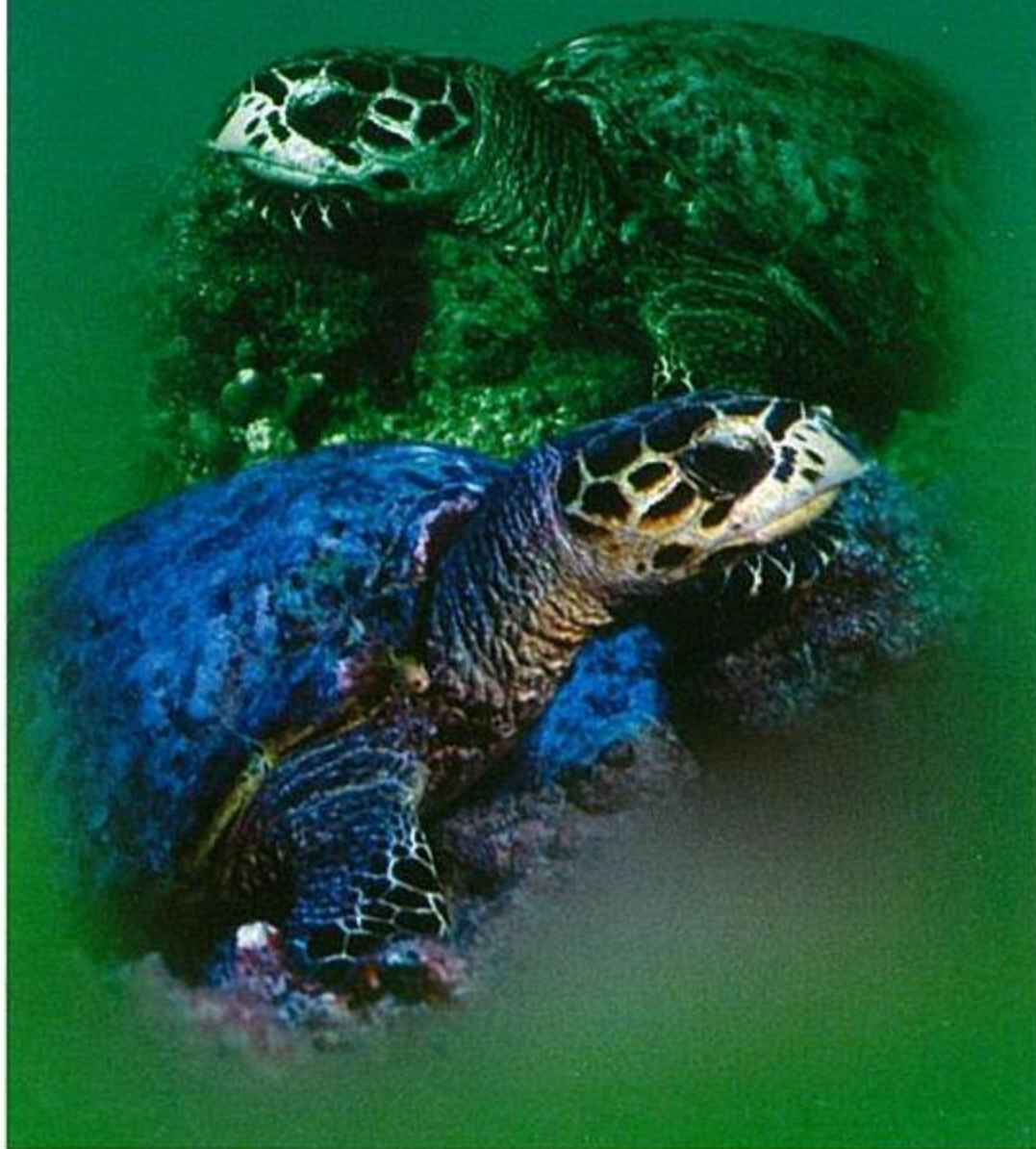


HAWKSBILL FACTS

A Hawk in the Sea



هيئة البيئة - أبوظبي
Environment Agency - ABU DHABI

THE HAWKSBILL



COLOUR	Brown with splashes of orange, yellow or reddish brown
SHELL	Elongated and oval with scutes on carapace
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES	Small head with hawk-like beak, two pairs of prefrontal scales on head and four pairs of costal scutes on carapace
FLIPPERS	2 claws.
JUVENILES	Black or dark brown with light brown or yellow colouration on edge of shell and limb
DIET	Sponges, jellyfish, squid, shrimp and other invertebrates found on coral reefs

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION

Hawksbills are found in offshore waters of mainland and island shelves but are more common near coral reef formations. The hawksbills' distribution is centered around tropical reef areas in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans from Japan to Australia and the British Isles to southern Brazil.

LIFE CYCLE AND NESTING CHARACTERISTICS OF HAWKSILLS IN THE UAE

Pre-reproductive period (females and males)	3-5 years
Breeding season	March to June (75 days)
Clutch size	75.95 (38 to 115)
Number of clutches	At least 2
Inter-nesting interval	12.5 days
Incubation period	55.19 days
Hatchling success	62.7%(20-92.1%)
Egg diameter	38.6mm
Track width	65.4cm(61-74cm)
Hatchling morphometry CCL, CCW, Wt	3.69cm,3.61cm, 12.62g
Adult morphometry CCL, CCW	69.8cm, 63.1cm



THREATS

1. Coastal Development: Construction, settlement, dredging, land filling and levelling activities have destroyed large areas of turtle nesting beaches around the world.

2. By-catch: many turtles become entangled in nets and subsequently drown. Some also die due to the ingestion of hooks.

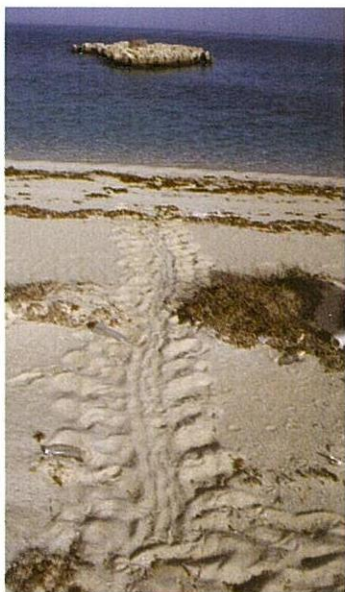
3. Marine Debris: Sea turtles may feed on discarded plastics, such as plastic bags and subsequently die. Marine debris lining beaches can also cause obstruction and affect nesting.

4. Pollution: Nutrient enrichment can affect the health of corals, and in turn have an impact on Hawksbills. Moreover, heavy metals and Phthalate esters have been found in the tissues of turtles. Many of these chemicals have mutagenic and carcinogenic properties.



CONSERVATION

The Hawksbill has been placed under the critically endangered category of the IUCN red list (IUCN 2002). Globally the loss of population is mainly attributed to hunting and loss of habitat. In the UAE, the hunting of sea turtles is banned. Also the ban on drift nets has minimized suffocation related deaths. However, the foraging and nesting habitats are still under natural and anthropogenic pressure. As a result, satellite tagging programs have been initiated in the UAE to identify post nesting migration routes and foraging habitats of Hawksbills. Moreover, a Marine Protected Area (Marawah) has been established that includes important hawksbill foraging habitats.



MERC's MISSION

The mission of the Marine Environment Research Center (MERC) of the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi is to manage, protect, rehabilitate, enhance, and develop fisheries and marine resources in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, consistent with the principle of sustainable development and subject to allocations established through local and national regulatory processes. The center is responsible for conservation and management of the Emirate's commercial, subsistence and recreational fisheries and their associated habitats; rehabilitation and enhancement of existing fishery resources and essential fish; marine wildlife and marine habitats; and the development of new fisheries.



هيئة البيئة - أبوظبي
Environment Agency - ABU DHABI

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY - ABU DHABI

P.O.Box 45553, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Tel: +971-2-4454777 Fax: +971-2-4463339

www.ead.ae