



OF INDIA

# HAWKSBILL TURTLES

The hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) gets its name from its tell-tale beak-shaped jaw. These turtles grow up to 2-3 feet and are one of the smaller species of sea turtles. Most of their diet constitutes sponges. Their narrow head and beak-shaped jaw allow them to feed in crevices in coral reefs. They are found predominantly in tropical waters with distributions throughout the central Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions.

## DIET

Hawksbill turtles feed on sponges, soft corals, zoanthids, ascidians, anemones, macroalgae, squid, and shrimp.



## REPRODUCTIVE BIOLOGY

Hawksbill turtles typically nest in tropical islands on beaches with vegetation cover. They nest every 2-5 years and can lay 3-5 clutches per season. Each clutch consists of around 160 eggs, on average, which takes about 50-60 days to incubate.



Lakshadweep Islands

Andaman & Nicobar Islands

## DISTRIBUTION

In India, hawksbill turtles nest and forage in the Lakshadweep archipelago and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. They nest mainly in December and January in Lakshadweep and September to October in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.