

Turtle Profiles

Green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*)

Stock: Part of the green Southern Great Barrier Reef (sGBR) stock

Status: Australia Vulnerable, Queensland Vulnerable

Population Trend: Recovering (3)

Preferred habitat: Seaweed-rich coral reefs and inshore seagrass pastures in tropical and subtropical waters

Diet: Adult green turtles feed mostly on seagrasses and algae although immature animals are carnivorous

Important nesting sites: Islands of the Capricorn Bunker Group and minor breeding aggregations on mainland beaches from Bustard Head to Bundaberg and Sunshine Coast

Mating: September—November

Nesting: October—April (peak: late December—early January)

Hatching: December—May (peak: February—March)



Image: Green turtle adult. Photo: Colin Limpus.

Physical characteristics:

Green Adult

- 4 pairs of large scales on each side (costal scales) of the carapace
- Non-overlapping carapace scales
- Carapace high domed
- Colour, light to dark green carapace with dark mottling, cream-white plastron
- Adult carapace approximately 1.0 m

Green Hatchling

- Colour, black to dark brown carapace with white margins and white plastron
- Carapace 5 cm long



Image: Green turtle hatchling. Photo: Colin Limpus.