

Turtle Profiles

Flatback turtle (*Natator depressus*)

Stock: Part of the flatback Eastern Queensland (eQld) stock

Status: Australia Vulnerable, Queensland Vulnerable

Population Trend: Stable (3)

Preferred habitat: Shallow, soft-bottomed seabed habitats away from reefs

Diet: Carnivorous (soft bodied prey such as sea cucumbers, soft corals and jellyfish)

Important nesting sites: Mon Repos in the south to Herald Island near Townsville in the north including Peak, Wild Duck, Avoid and Curtis Islands

Mating: Unknown

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

Hatching: December—March (peak: February)



Image: Flatback turtle adult. Photo: Colin Limpus.

Physical characteristics:

Flatback Adult

- 4 pairs or more of large scales on each side (costal scales) of the carapace
- Non-overlapping carapace scales
- Carapace low domed with upturned edges
- Colour, olive grey carapace
- Adult carapace approximately 0.9 metres

Flatback Hatchling

- Colour, olive carapace, green plastron
- Carapace 6 cm long



Image: Flatback turtle hatchling. Photo: Colin Limpus.