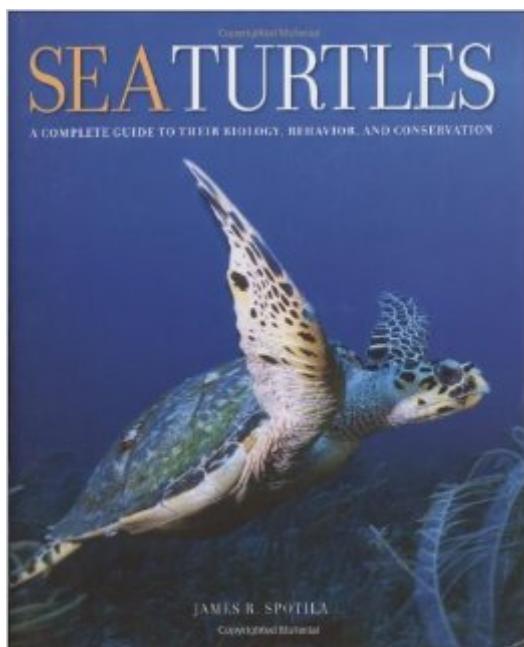


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# Sea Turtles: A Complete Guide To Their Biology, Behavior, And Conservation



## Synopsis

For more than a hundred million years, sea turtles have been swimming in the world's oceans. These magnificent, long-lived creatures spend their lives in the water, coming ashore to lay their eggs. Upon hatching, the baby turtles leave the nest and enter a dangerous world of storms and predators. The females will return to the same beach to lay their own eggs when they reach maturity a decade later. Today, there are seven species of sea turtle: the grass-feeding green turtle; the sea sponge-feeding hawksbill; the olive ridley; the Kemp's ridley, which is the smallest species; the loggerhead; the flatback of Australia; and the giant leatherback. Having escaped the mass extinction that wiped out the dinosaurs, these ancient reptiles today face new dangers that threaten their survival: pollution, hunting, and the destruction of their nesting grounds. Will this century be the last to witness their majesty? Will succeeding generations live in a world devoid of their graceful presence? Marine biologist James R. Spotila has spent much of his life unraveling the mysteries of these graceful creatures and working to ensure their survival. In *Sea Turtles*, he offers a comprehensive and compelling account of their history and life cycle based on the most recent scientific data—and suggests what we can do now to save them. From the Kemp's ridley, which nests on a single beach on Mexico's Gulf Coast, to the nomadic leatherback, which can weigh up to a ton and is in the most imminent danger of extinction, Spotila offers a vivid description of their diets and mating habits, and the conservation efforts being made on their behalf. Illustrated with stunning color photographs by the world's leading nature photographers, *Sea Turtles* will inform and inspire readers of all ages everywhere.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Jim Spotila's new sea turtle book has an ambitious subtitle. In the enormous and ever growing literature on marine turtles, how could any single volume be a "Complete" guide to all the fundamental aspects of their biology and conservation? Ambitious, but successful. If one had to find a single book to give to a new entrant in the field of sea turtles - or, for that matter, to an advanced sea turtle scientist who was normally focused upon one aspect of sea turtle biology, one locality, or one research technique, this volume would be the one to choose. It succeeds well in giving a thorough, scientific, and up-to-date overview of the field. The text of "Sea Turtles" breaks down into thirteen chapters, each with a lively or evocative title (from "The Seven Swimmers" (or should it be eight?\*) to "Under the Shell;" "The Giant Mariner" to "Dreaming of Eden." The style is highly readable, with many personal anecdotes and comments, which offer both scientific insight into what turtles are all about, and also the sense of wonder and personal dedication that is the hallmark of virtually all the players in this growing field. The scope is truly global - not just literally, for there is no geographic parochialism in this book, but metaphorically also. There are not only detailed accounts of each species, but also good discussions of turtle "phenomena" - sea turtle ancestry, turtle life cycles, population stresses, navigation, migrations, the arribada phenomenon, the pluses and minuses of head-starting, and so on. An attractive feature of the book is the inclusion of a number of short biographies, with good photo portraits, of selected individuals who have made major contributions to sea turtle biology. Just a dozen or so had the honor to make "Spotila's list" - a challenging selection task in view of the enormous number of people now doing sea turtle work, but while many real-world winners did not make the list, there were certainly no losers included! One imagines that the Spotila laureates will include this prestigious recognition somewhere near the top of their proud achievements in the next version of their personal CVs. The photography is superb. Many talented photographers contributed their work, and there are stunning marine turtle images on almost all of the 227 pages of this book, many of them taken underwater and revealing our shelled friends in their true medium, where they look so much more graceful, animated, and at ease than in the usual pictures of an exhausted, sand-covered, weeping turtle struggling to complete its duties on the nesting beach.\*Reviewer's comment.

Sea Turtles by James R. Spotila is a fantastic guide to sea turtle biology and conservation. Scientific information is presented in clear language that is equally useful to adult and school kid. The photos

are unsurpassed in beauty. This book explains the precarious situation of these unusual animals, and why we must work to preserve them. Spotila weaves in stories from his own research in Costa Rica, making his experience accessible to all. An excellent read, and lovely coffee table book!

This book is beautiful. From one of the top sea turtle conservationists. It covers almost everything there is to know about sea turtles. The diagrams of turtle anatomy really help to understand these creatures. It is also great that Spotila profiles some of the dedicated conservationists working to protect the turtles. The pictures are stunning. The books large pages do the pictures and the turtles justice. After reading the book, you feel as if you have been initiated into the world of sea turtles. And, an added bonus, a portion of the royalties will be donated to Leatherback Trust. In short, if you like sea turtles, buy this book.

Many people in today's world would rather look at picture books instead of actually reading a book. The beauty about this book by James Spotila is that you get all the joys of looking at colorful, vibrant pictures while still learning about sea turtles and their fight for life. Spotila goes over all seven species of sea turtle, from the well known green turtle to the lesser known flatback turtle, and informs in great detail ways we can save these majestic creatures. Did you know that female leatherback turtle populations have dropped from 90,000 in 1980 to fewer than 5,000 today? Spotila gives many examples that may scare you, and that is what we want. He wants whoever is reading this book, whether you are a sea turtle enthusiast or a bored patient at the doctors, to be concerned about the future of sea turtles. However, just when you are about to put the book down because all these facts are sad, Spotila swoops in and informs about how sea turtles are actually starting to make a come back, and he gives advice on how we "ordinary" people can help push sea turtles back up the list and off the endangered species list. One great example that the book gives to help save sea turtles is to simply educate people or natives. That being said I encourage you to read this book, learn about the lives of sea turtles, and go out there and teach people about sea turtle conservation. Who knows, maybe your knowledge will help save a turtle.

This book is amazing! Beautiful Pictures!! Our family saved baby sea turtles on a vacation. Bought this book for my ten year old's (very high level reader) non-fiction book report because she fell in love with the species. It was huge and very textbook-like but beautifully written and understandable. Talks generally about sea turtles. Talks about the parts of a turtle, the reproductive cycle, and about all the different types of sea turtles. Talks about the dangers they are in. I am very happy with the

purchase and my daughter was truly inspired.

I've bought many "coffee table" nature books in the past, but this is absolutely the best. It has all the elements, beautiful photography and writing that draw you in. I stayed up until 2:00 am the night I received this book and read it cover to cover. That's my first test of a great book. The second test, when the things you learned keep coming back to you. I can't stop talking about the all the scientific facts and concepts, the history, and the politics that surround these beautiful creatures. My only problem with the book has been I can't get it back when I lend it to friends.

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