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Geographical range

Species of the Day: Hawksbill Turtle

The **Hawksbill Turtle**, *Eretmochelys imbricata*, is classified as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It is a migratory marine reptile, found in tropical and, to a lesser extent, subtropical waters.

Hawksbill Turtles face a variety of hazards from: 1) Direct take - for food or for the tortoiseshell trade; 2) Fishing impacts - incidental capture and entanglement in nets and long lines ; 3) Beachfront development - that alters or destroys nesting beach habitat; 4) Pollution - ingestible plastics in the ocean; and 5) Climate change - this may affect breeding, since sea turtle sex ratios are dependent upon the temperature of incubation. Hawksbills are also acutely threatened by loss of coral reef communities which act as their feeding sites.

Numerous countries have temporarily or permanently banned all exploitation of sea turtles and their eggs, and are attempting to improve enforcement of international bans on the tortoiseshell trade (although extensive illegal trafficking still occurs). Preventing this black market trade, increasing public awareness, and protecting nesting and foraging areas, are key to the protection of Hawksbills.

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