



Image from USFWS

# Loggerhead Life History

Worksheet to Accompany the  
PhotoDocumentary by Rachel Teller

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1. Which is NOT an adaptation that makes sea turtles well suited for life at sea? (circle one)

- They occupy warm waters around the globe.
- They can hold their breath for a long time in their cold-water habitats.
- They have flippers to help them swim through the water quickly and easily.

2. Who has inhabited Earth the longest- sea turtles or human beings? \_\_\_\_\_

3. T / F: Loggerheads begin their lives on land as eggs, and only return to feed and reproduce.

4. After mating in coastal waters, male loggerhead turtles return to their \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ and females remain near the coast throughout the nesting season.

5. Sea turtles are a late-maturing species. It takes a female about \_\_\_\_\_ years to reach  
reproductive maturity, an age when she is able to lay eggs. Although they don't nest every year,  
they lay 3-5 nests per \_\_\_\_\_.

6. Natal imprinting describes the behavior demonstrated by most female turtles in which they

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

7. Loggerhead nests typically contain about \_\_\_\_\_ eggs. Of the following choices, which is the best estimate of how many eggs a female loggerhead lays in one nesting season- 100, 500 or 1,000? (circle one) Remember to think about how many eggs she lays each time she lays a nest...

8. T / F: A mother sea turtle provides parental care to her offspring.

9. Incubation takes about 55-60 days on South Carolina beaches. In a cooler climate, like that in North Carolina, the incubation period will be \_\_\_\_\_ (longer or shorter).

10. The genes you inherited from your parents made you either female or male. What determines the sex of a sea turtle? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Warm nest temperatures produce \_\_\_\_\_ and males come from cooler nests.

Think about what would happen if people exhibited Temperature-dependent Sex Determination...

12. The \_\_\_\_\_ is the temperature that produces about half females and half males (29°C in SC).

13. A \_\_\_\_\_ is an egg that the turtle has broken through with its caruncle, but the turtle is not yet completely free from the shell.

14. Why does a depression form in the sand over the nest cavity? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

15. When (time of day and temperature) do hatchlings usually emerge? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

16. The \_\_\_\_\_ usually lasts about three days. During this time, the turtles try to make it offshore to the Gulf Stream.

17. Even if an egg incubates and successfully hatches, only about \_\_\_\_\_ hatchlings make it to become an adult sea turtle.

18. T / F: The lost years refers to the period between emergence from the nest and the return to coastal waters as juveniles, when the turtles are about three years old.

19. Many small turtles spend their first 15 years in the North Atlantic \_\_\_\_\_, the Mediterranean Sea, and the Sargasso Sea, which is not a true sea.

20. Sargassum provides good habitat for the small turtles because there is plenty of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ associated with the floating algal masses.

21. Most adult sea turtles travel thousands of miles through the world's oceans every year to \_\_\_\_\_ between foraging grounds, mating areas, and nesting beaches. They may live for 100 years or more!