

SEA TURTLES OF SEYCHELLES - A VISITOR GUIDE



Discover the turtles that nest and feed in our national parks



The Republic of Seychelles is one of the most important places in the world for sea turtles. Our islands and surrounding waters provide **safe nesting beaches, feeding grounds, and migration stopovers** for these ancient marine animals.

At SPGA-managed parks such as **Curieuse** and **Ste Anne**, which are part of Seychelles' granitic inner islands, visitors may encounter two main species of nesting sea turtles: the **Hawksbill Turtle** and the **Green Turtle**.

TURTLE CONSERVATION & RESEARCH IN OUR PARKS

SPGA actively works to protect turtles through science-based conservation. Our work includes:

- **Nesting monitoring** – recording tracks, nests, and nesting females
- **Tagging programs** – helping us understand movements, growth, and survival
- **Temperature studies** – placing temperature loggers in nesting beaches to track sand temperature
 - This is important because turtle sex is temperature-dependent: warmer sand produces more females, cooler sand more males
- **Habitat protection** – managing beaches and surrounding marine areas



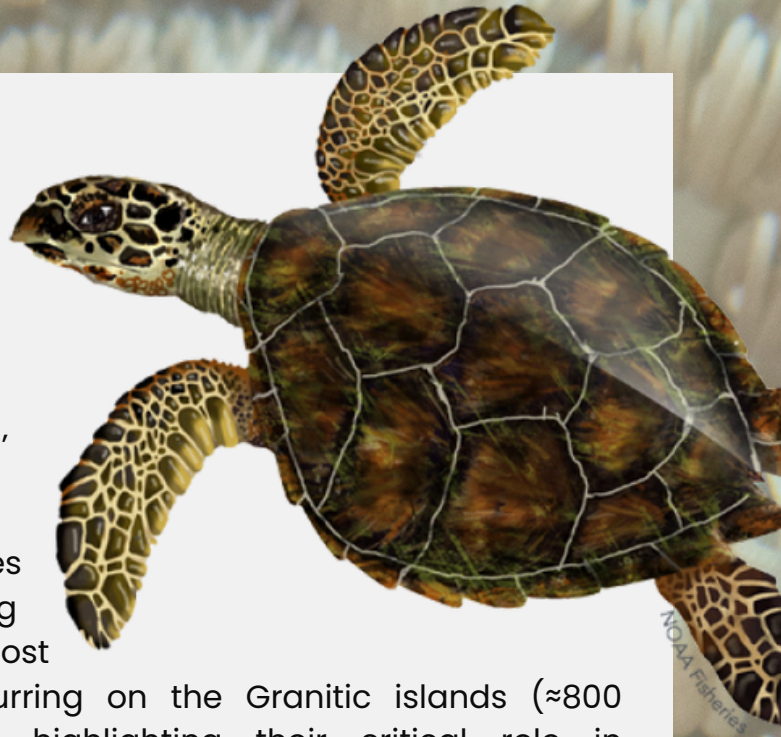
HAWKSBILL TURTLE

(*Eretmochelys imbricata*)

Status: Critically Endangered

Hawksbill turtles are closely associated with coral reefs and are one of Seychelles' most important nesting turtle species.

Thanks to long-term protection, Seychelles now supports one of the largest remaining hawksbill populations in the world, with most nesting (~84% of regional nests) occurring on the Granitic islands (~800 females/year), including SPGA parks, highlighting their critical role in conservation.



Nesting in Seychelles

Hawksbill turtles nest from **October to March**, returning to the beaches where they hatched, sometimes after migrating hundreds or thousands of kilometres.

- ~ **200 eggs** per nest, **1–6 nests** per season
- **50–70 days** incubation
- Unusually nests during the day

Feeding & habitat Hawksbills use a variety of habitats and are often associated with coral reefs. They mainly feed on sea sponges, but also eat algae and other small marine animals. Reef ledges and caves provide important shelter and resting places



GREEN TURTLE

(*Chelonia mydas*)

Green turtles are the gentle grazers of the ocean.

By feeding primarily on they help keep shallow **habitats healthy and productive.**

seagrass and **algae**, marine



Nesting in Seychelles Green turtles mainly nest at night. While nesting is far more concentrated on the outer islands, individuals also use the inner granitic islands as feeding and resting areas, including SPGA parks.

- **Southern islands (including Aldabra):** ~10,000 females per year
- **Amirantes group:** ~500 females per year

Life cycle Green turtles have one of the longest life cycles of any reptile:

- Reach adulthood between **15 and 50 years**
- Females return to nest every **2–5 years**
- Lay **1–6 clutches** per nesting season, with **70–125 eggs** per nest
- Eggs incubate in the sand for **50–70 days**



After nesting, female green turtles from Seychelles disperse widely across the Western Indian Ocean. Satellite tracking has shown individuals travelling **700–2,500 km** to reach foraging areas along the coasts of East Africa, Madagascar, and within Seychelles itself.

