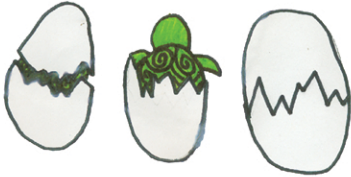


CLUTCH SIZE and EGG LAYING

The average clutch size of a diamondback terrapin is 8 to 12 eggs. They lay 2 clutches or 16-24 eggs per year.

The female turtles tend to lay their eggs on sandy beaches.



FOOD

Young turtles are “carnivores” which means they eat meat and some leafy plants. The meat provides protein to help them grow.

Mature turtles are “omnivores” which means they eat mostly leafy plants and some meat.

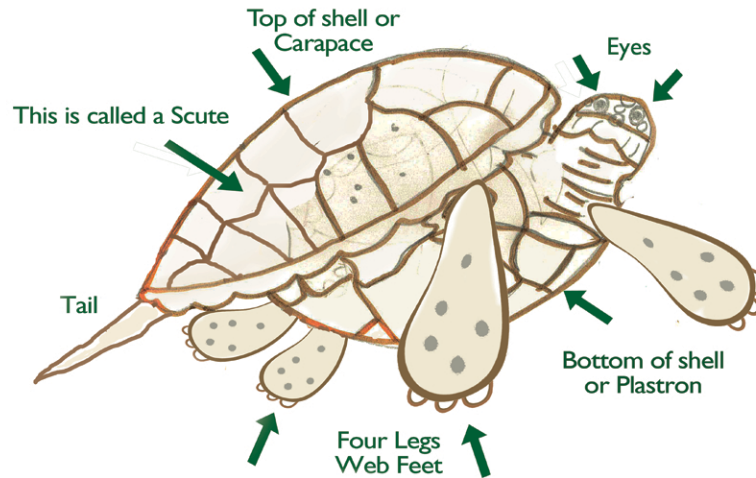
Meat consists of small insects, snails, worms and dead marine animals and fish.

Wild turtles cannot have any dairy products (milk or cheese) or processed foods.



TERRAPIN TURTLES

ANATOMY OF A TERRAPIN TURTLE



FUN FACT! People used to eat terrapins, but usually not now.

DESCRIPTION

Terrapins have diamond-shaped scutes on their carapaces. The underside of their shells (plastron) can range from yellowish to greenish gray with or without dark markings and they have whitish skin covered with black spots or streaks. Their feet are strongly webbed.



BODY

- Their ears don't stick out from their heads like human ears.
- Terrapins have powerful jaws for crushing crabs and snails and other food.
- The terrapins are attached to their shells and cannot slip them off. Their shells are attached to their backbones and ribs.
- Male terrapins are smaller than females, weighing an average of 0.5 pounds and measuring 4-4.5 inches in length. Females weigh an average of 1.5 pounds and measure 6-9 inches long.

Sea Grant
NJ Sea Grant Consortium

Cadette Troop #93
Debi Demcsak & Shanda McManus

HABITAT

Diamondback turtles are found in North America.

These turtles live in bays or estuaries.

The turtles sometimes swim into nets and get caught.

During the cold winter months diamondbacks hibernate.



THREATS

Females are vulnerable to predators when nesting and eggs are preyed upon by raccoons, muskrats, foxes, skunks and even stray dogs and cats.



Gulls, herons, crabs and crows prey on hatchlings.



Sadly, some turtles think plastic pollution is food and will eat it. This can make them sick.

Many turtles become entangled in old fishing nets, fishing line and lost crab traps.