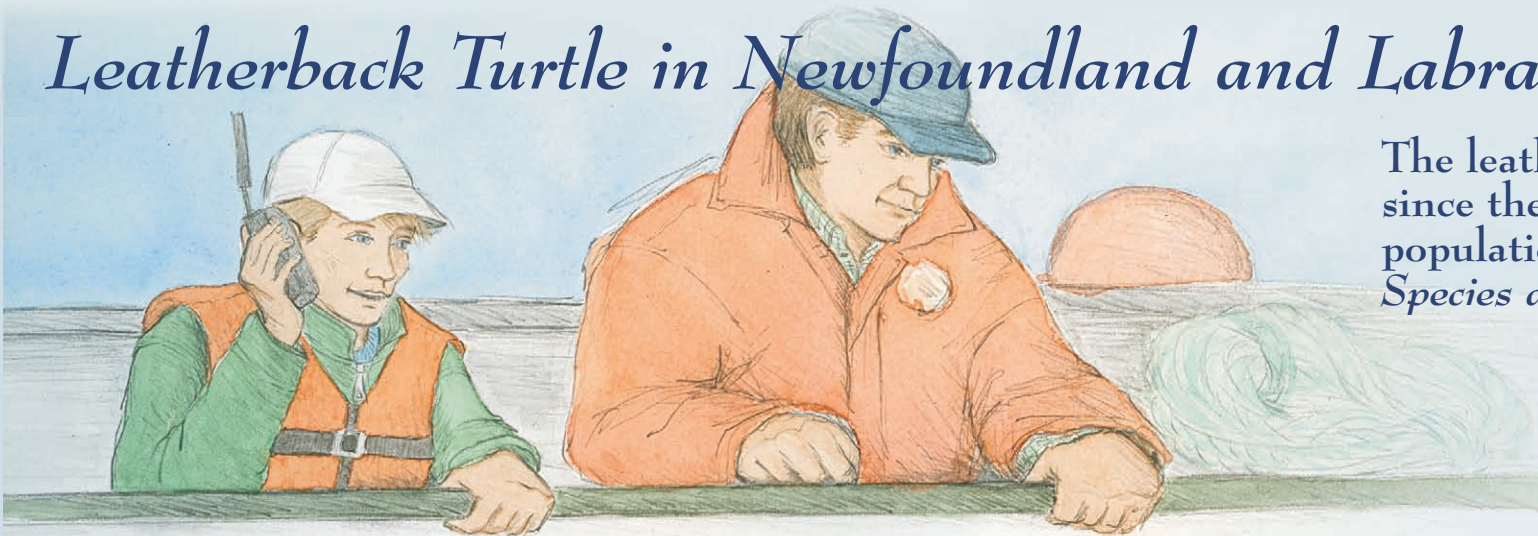


# Leatherback Turtle in Newfoundland and Labrador Waters



**Professional fish harvesters** know that the leatherback turtle can become entangled in fishing gear. Their actions are vital to the species' recovery.

The leatherback turtle may mistake floating plastic waste from bags, deflated balloons, and other objects for its main prey—**jellyfish**. If ingested, these materials can block the leatherback turtle's gut, causing it to starve.

The leatherback turtle is the world's largest turtle. It has survived since the time of the dinosaurs. The species has experienced a global population decline in recent years. Protected under the federal *Species at Risk Act*, the leatherback turtle is an endangered species.



Canadian Sea Turtle Network

**A powerful swimmer** and a precise navigator, the leatherback turtle migrates to our waters in late summer and early fall. Leatherback turtles from Atlantic Canada migrate more than 4,000 km to nesting beaches in tropical regions.



M. James, Canadian Sea Turtle Network

Scientists from Dalhousie University and the Canadian Sea Turtle Network tracked a leatherback turtle by satellite from Newfoundland and the Gulf of St. Lawrence to Trinidad, off the coast of South America, arriving at the same nesting beach twice in two years.

For information, visit [www.seaturtle.ca](http://www.seaturtle.ca).

## What you can do:

**If you see a leatherback turtle, take a picture or video. Note the date, time, and location. Send the information to Dr. Jack Lawson at Fisheries and Oceans Canada: [whalesightings@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:whalesightings@dfo-mpo.gc.ca).**

**If a leatherback turtle has become trapped in fishing gear, contact Whale Release and Strandings at: 1-888-895-3003 (toll free) day or night.**

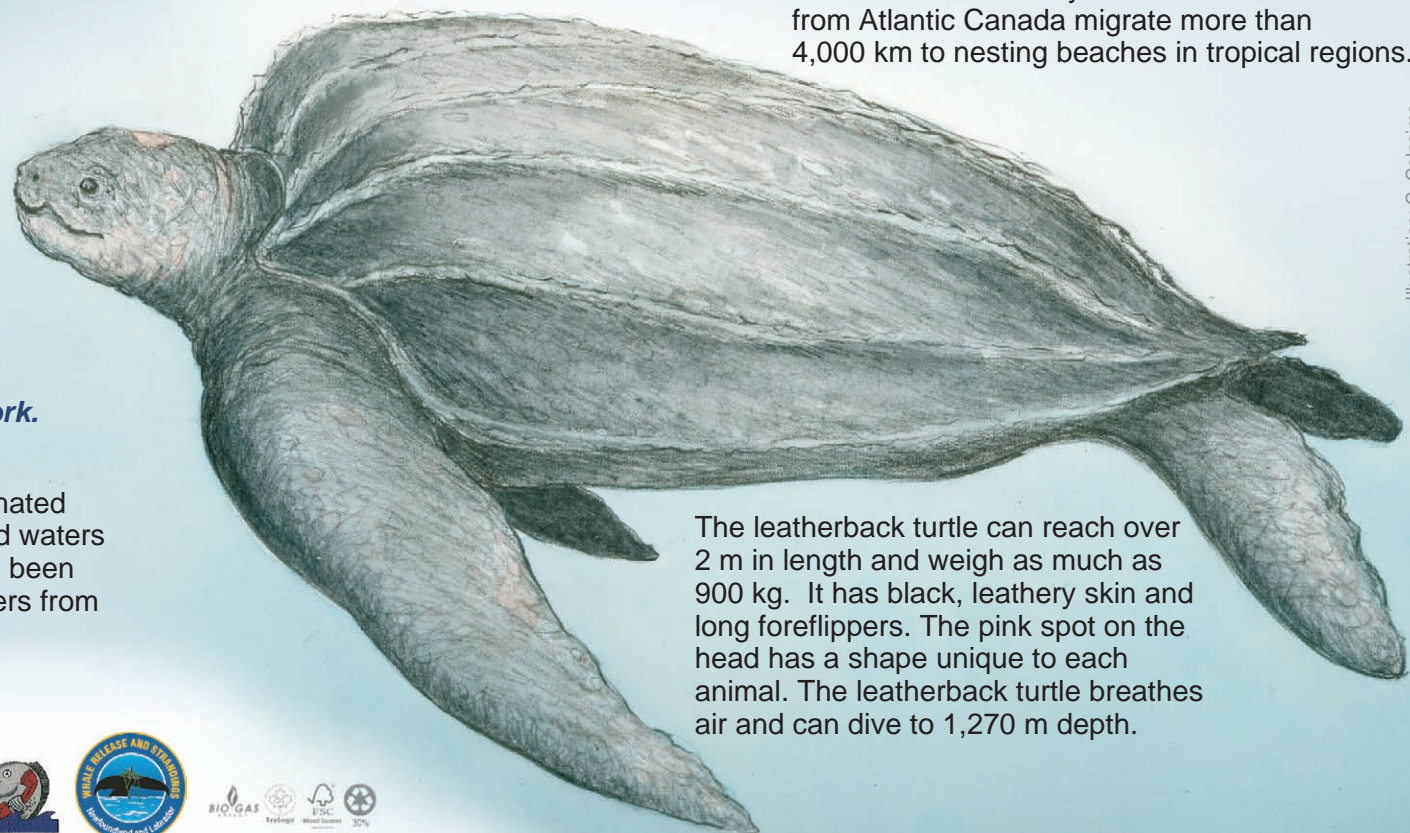
**Keep plastic waste from entering the ocean.**

**Ask professional fish harvesters about their work.**

Scientists with Fisheries and Oceans Canada estimated 1,000 leatherback turtles in southern Newfoundland waters during August and September of 2007. There have been approximately 500 reported sightings and encounters from 1946 to 2010.



Lion's Mane, *Cyanea capillata*



The leatherback turtle can reach over 2 m in length and weigh as much as 900 kg. It has black, leathery skin and long foreflippers. The pink spot on the head has a shape unique to each animal. The leatherback turtle breathes air and can dive to 1,270 m depth.

Illustration: C. Colosimo

Placemat by:



[www.intervale.ca](http://www.intervale.ca)

With support from:

