

Green

SEA TURTLE

C h e l o n i a m y d a s



Willow Melamet

- The green turtle is the largest species of hard shelled turtles and is the second largest of all sea turtles
 - Adults weigh 240-420 pounds
- Greens are primarily herbivorous (vegetarian) and eat sea grass and algae. *Due to a plant based diet, this turtle gets its name from the greenish color of their fat.*
- Greens are easily identifiable by having a single pair of prefrontal scales (large scales between the eyes)



- Greens are the most commonly observed turtle around St. John, primarily found foraging in sea grass beds
 - Many bays such as Maho are important foraging habitats for juvenile and subadult green sea turtles
- Green turtle nesting is sparse on St. John, receiving only around 1 documented nest per season
 - Nest in great numbers on surrounding islands such as St. Croix and Puerto Rico



Willow Melamet

- Green turtle populations were greatly reduced due to the harvest of their fat, meat and eggs
 - *Although hunting and collection of eggs is illegal in countries such as the United States, it is allowed in many others*
- **Green turtles play a key role in the maintenance of seagrass bed ecosystems**
- Additional threats: Boat strikes, fisheries bycatch, nesting and foraging habitat degradation, climate change

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