



Watch me grow



Turtle





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Contents

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4-5

I'm a green sea turtle

6-7

My mom and dad

8-9

Mom buries her eggs

10-11

It's time to hatch out

12-13

I'm off to the sea

14-15

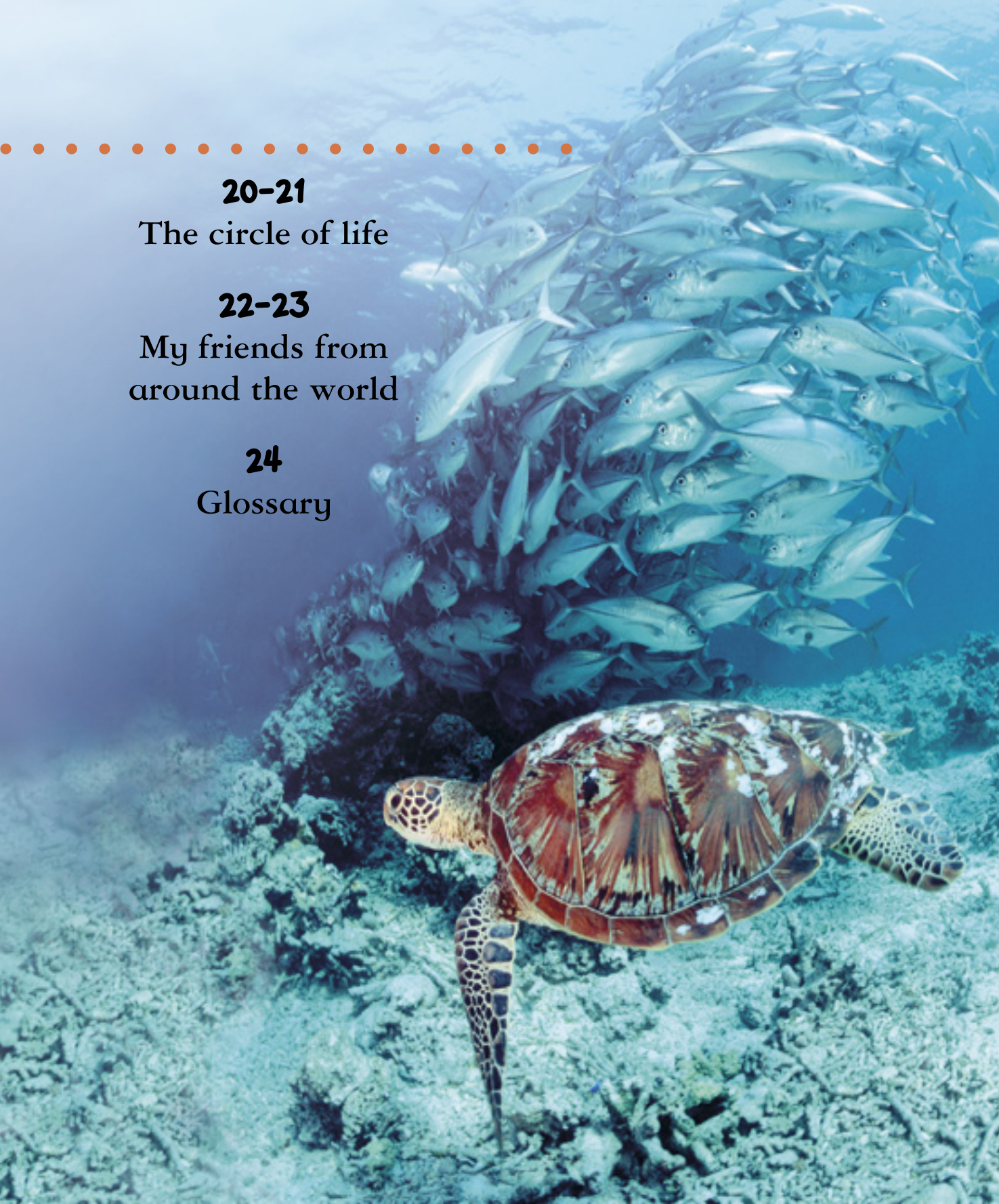
Seaweed hide and seek

16-17

It's time to get clean

18-19

I'm a big turtle now

A large school of silver fish swimming in the water above a sea turtle resting on a coral reef. The fish are arranged in a dense, vertical column, moving from the top right towards the bottom left. The sea turtle is positioned in the lower right, facing left, with its head and front flippers visible. The background is a clear blue ocean with a sandy and coral seabed.

20-21

The circle of life

22-23

My friends from
around the world

24

Glossary

I'm a green sea turtle

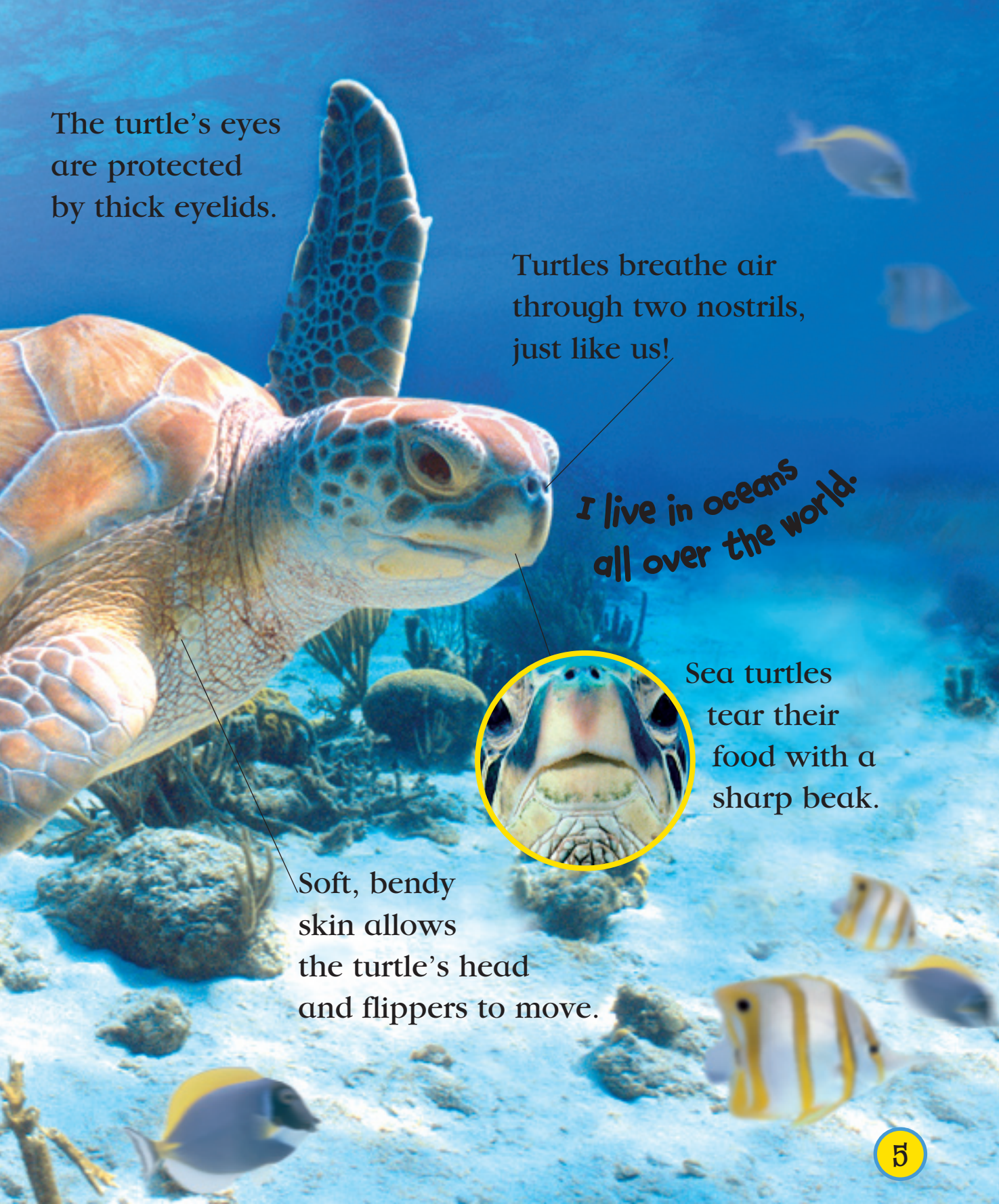
I'm a green sea turtle. I swim in the ocean, but I come to the surface to breathe air. I eat plants and small animals from the sea and spend most of my life under the water with my friends.

A hard shell covers the turtle's back and chest.



The flippers are covered in tough scales.






The turtle's eyes are protected by thick eyelids.

Turtles breathe air through two nostrils, just like us!

I live in oceans all over the world.



Sea turtles tear their food with a sharp beak.

Soft, bendy skin allows the turtle's head and flippers to move.

My mom and dad

My mom and dad met while swimming in the sea. After mating, Mom will lay four or five nests full of eggs. She will lay one nest every two weeks.

The male turtle uses his flippers to hold on to the female.

This is my dad.

This is my mom.

After mating, the turtles do not stay together.

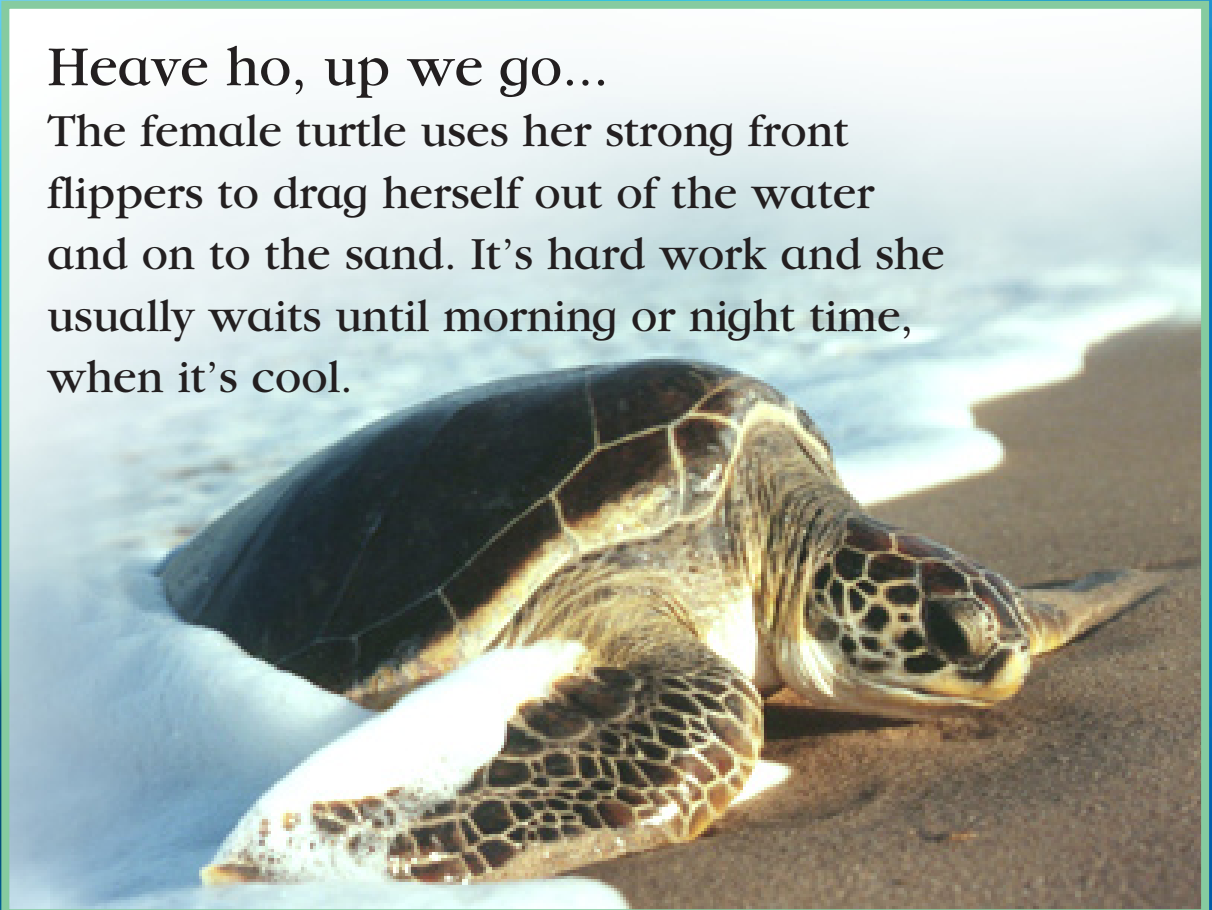


Swimming to shore

Sea turtles can travel hundreds or thousands of miles from the place where they live to the place where they mate and lay eggs.

Heave ho, up we go...

The female turtle uses her strong front flippers to drag herself out of the water and on to the sand. It's hard work and she usually waits until morning or night time, when it's cool.



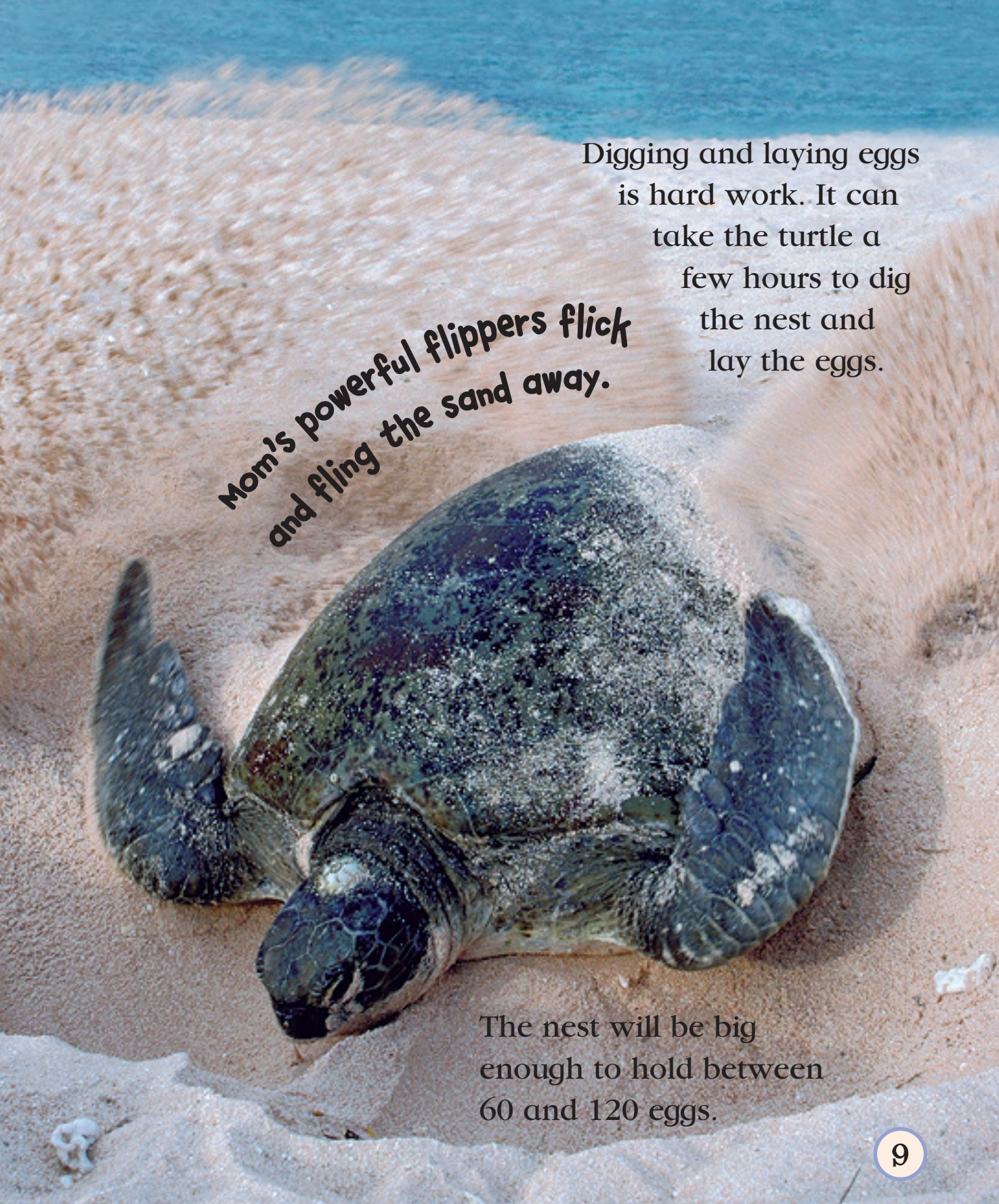
Mom buries her eggs

My mom crawls up on to the sand to lay her eggs. She digs a hole and lays them one at a time. Our eggs have soft shells so they do not break when they fall. The sandy nest will protect us and keep us warm.



Safe and sound

After laying the eggs, the turtle covers them with sand using her back flippers. Turtles lay their eggs on the same beach every year.

A large sea turtle is shown on a sandy beach. The turtle's shell is dark and textured, and its flippers are spread out. The background features the ocean with white-capped waves crashing onto the shore. The text is overlaid on the upper right and middle sections of the image.

Digging and laying eggs
is hard work. It can
take the turtle a
few hours to dig
the nest and
lay the eggs.

**Mom's powerful flippers flick
and fling the sand away.**

The nest will be big
enough to hold between
60 and 120 eggs.

It's time to hatch out

After two months under the sand, we hatch out of our shells. Once everyone has hatched, we all work together to dig to the surface.


Digging through the sand is very hard work. It can take the turtles a whole week to dig to the surface.


Let's get digging.


This crab can feel something moving under the sand. Hurry up turtles—he's starting to dig for his dinner!

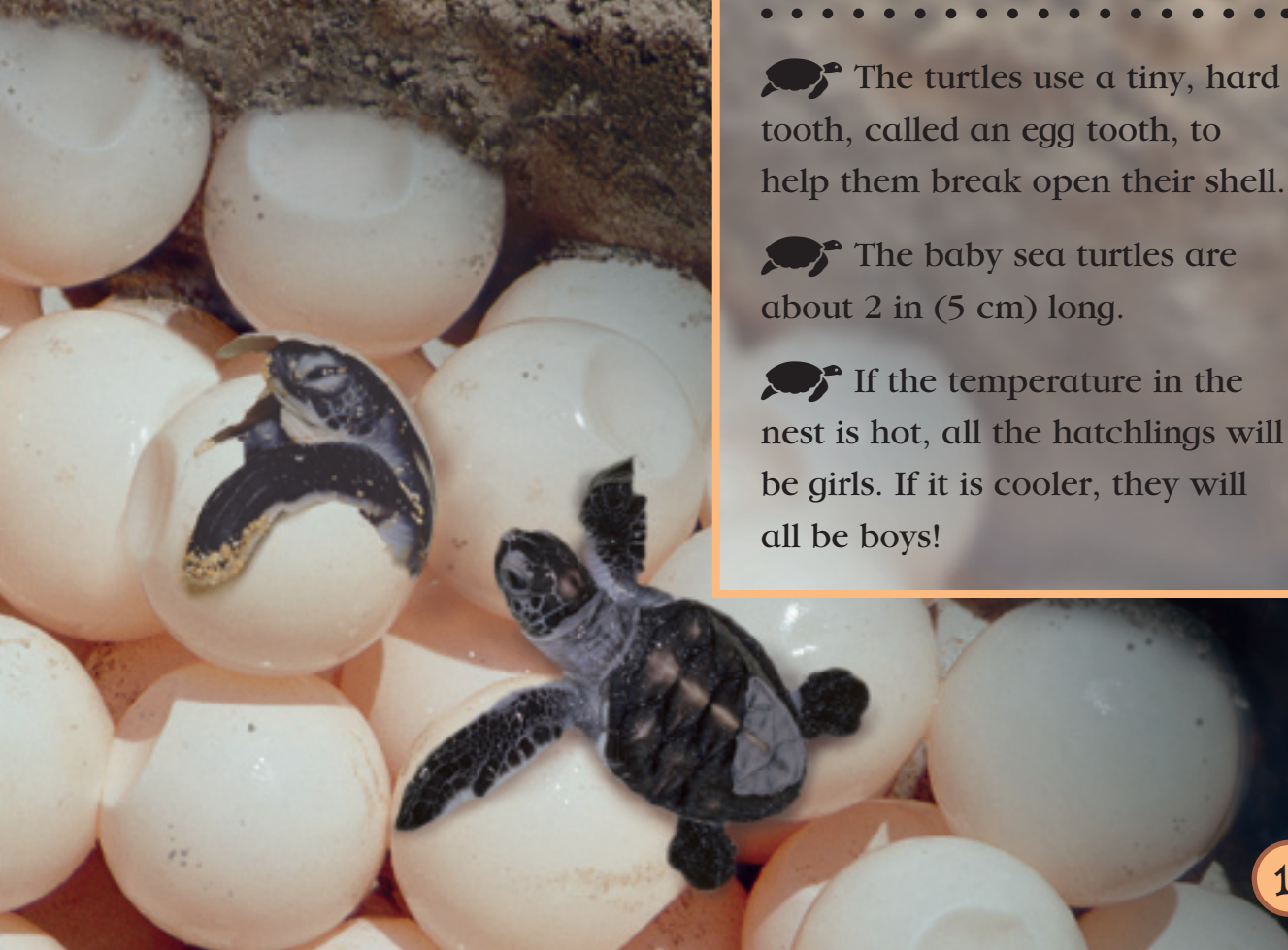


Turtle facts

 The turtles use a tiny, hard tooth, called an egg tooth, to help them break open their shell.

 The baby sea turtles are about 2 in (5 cm) long.

 If the temperature in the nest is hot, all the hatchlings will be girls. If it is cooler, they will all be boys!





I'm off to the sea

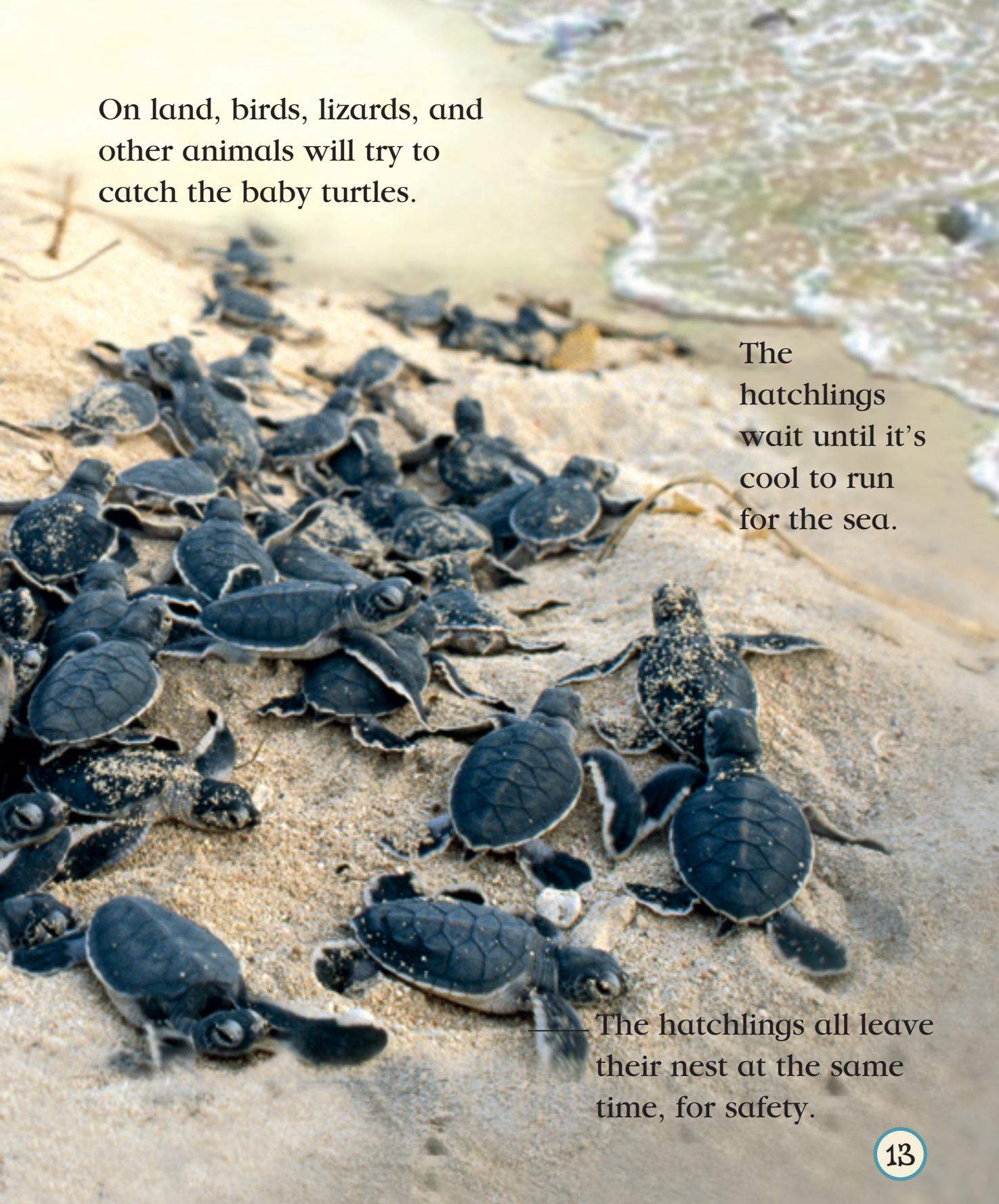
My brothers and sisters and
I work together to dig our
way to the surface.

Then we all rush for the sea.

Once we are in the water,
we all swim away.

*Hurry up! It's safer in the sea,
let's get there as quick as we can.*



A large group of dark-colored sea turtle hatchlings is gathered on a sandy beach. They are positioned near the water's edge, where gentle waves are washing onto the shore. The hatchlings have dark, patterned shells and are moving in various directions, some towards the water. The background shows the ocean and the sandy beach.

On land, birds, lizards, and other animals will try to catch the baby turtles.

The hatchlings wait until it's cool to run for the sea.

The hatchlings all leave their nest at the same time, for safety.




Seaweed hide and seek

Now that I am in the ocean,
I stay safe by hiding in the
seaweed. This will be my home
until I am bigger. I eat small animals
that live in the seaweed.

The turtles will spend
many years floating
on seaweed.

Turtle treats

.....

 Adult sea turtles eat mainly sea-grasses that grow deeper down, but baby sea turtles eat all sorts of tiny animals that live near the surface. These are called plankton. Jellyfish and sponges also make a tasty treat for the young turtles.

This turtle is two months old. She stays close to the surface so she can breathe.

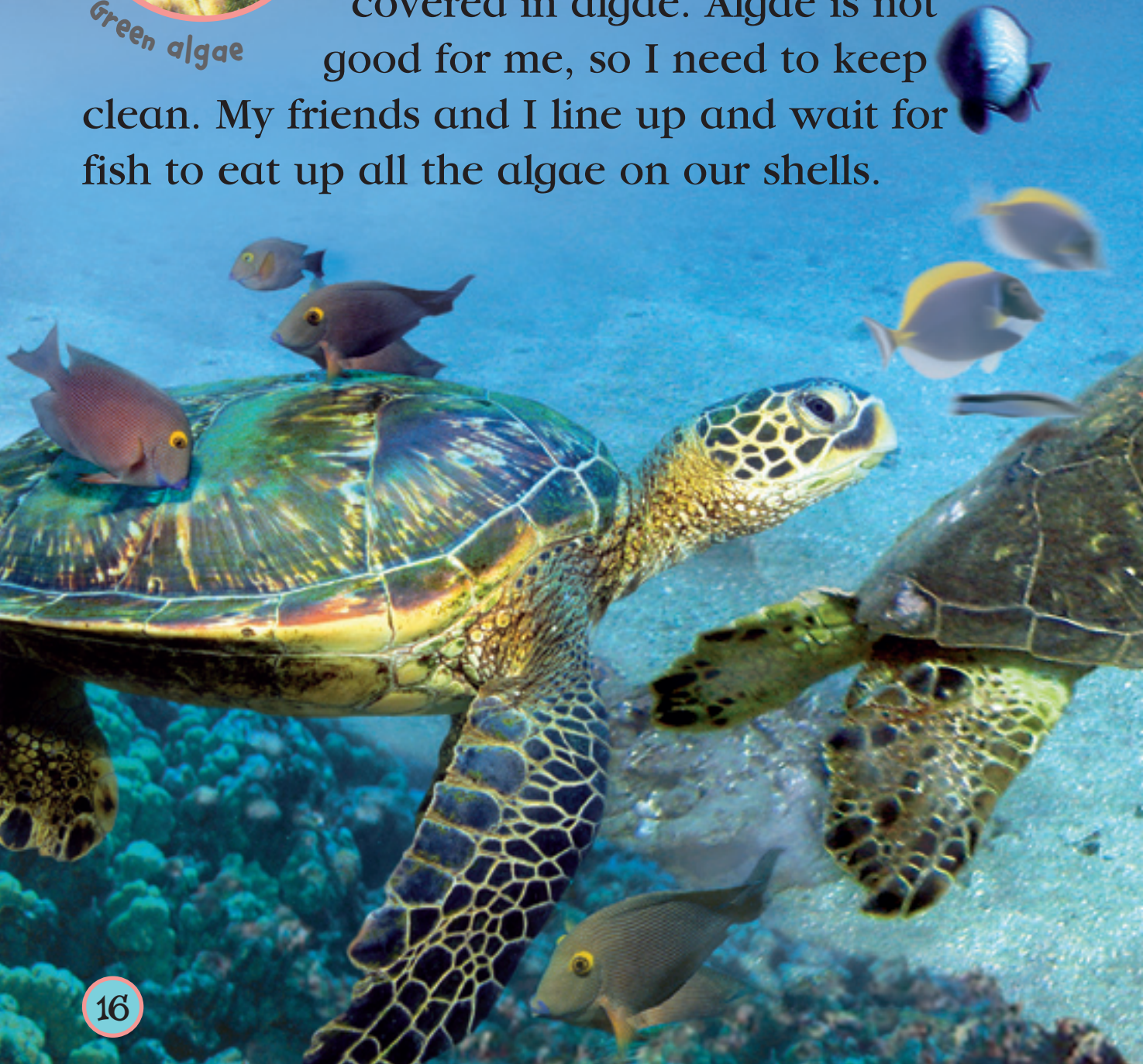




Green algae

It's time to get clean

As I grow bigger and swim around more, my shell gets covered in algae. Algae is not good for me, so I need to keep clean. My friends and I line up and wait for fish to eat up all the algae on our shells.



At the cleaning station, the fish get food, and the turtles get cleaned.


All clean... See you later guys.





Sometimes cleaning only takes a few minutes—other times it can take hours.

Cleaning facts

.....

 The algae on the turtles' shells slows them down in the water and can cause illness.

 At the cleaning station, the turtles stretch out so the fish can reach every spot.

 Sometimes shrimp also help with the cleaning.

I'm a big turtle now

I'm 15 years old. I'm finally big enough to swim anywhere in the ocean on my own. Most of the time I like to stay close to land, where there is a lot of food to eat.



Sea turtles need to surface for air.

Sea turtles are very strong swimmers.



Underwater life

Adult sea turtles can stay under water for up to five hours before taking a breath of air.



Eat your greens
Adult sea turtles eat only plants. They eat seaweed, sea grass, and algae. They spend most of their time looking for food in shallow areas of the sea.

This turtle is looking for a rock cave to sleep in.



The circle of life goes
around and around



Now you know how I turned
into a grown-up sea turtle.

Bye bye, I'm off to swim the seas.





My friends from around the world

Some of my friends live in freshwater rivers and lakes and some live in the salty ocean with me. But we are all turtles.



Snake-necked turtles live in fresh water rivers all over Australia.



Hawksbill turtles live in warm seas all around the world.

I'm a Leatherback turtle.



Glossary



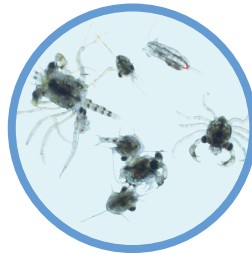
Flipper
The turtle's arm. It is flat and shaped for swimming.



Hatch
When the baby sea turtle pecks its way out of its egg.



Beak
The hard upper part of the turtle's mouth, used for eating.



Plankton
Tiny sea animals that are food for the adult sea turtle.



Scales
Hard, flat plates that make up the turtle's shell and skin.



Reef
A hard ridge made up of coral, rocks and sand.

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I start life as a tiny egg, but how do I grow
into a big turtle that swims in the sea?
Turn the pages and watch me grow!



Colorful photographs
and lively text make
learning all about
life cycles fun!

Includes fantastic
facts about all kinds
of turtles.

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