

Hawksbill turtle

Taku (Eretmochelys imbricata)



The *Hawksbill turtle* has a distinctly narrow heart-shaped shell, and often has a distinct vertebral keel. Hawksbill turtles have a tropical and subtropical Indian, Pacific and Atlantic Ocean distribution. It is an Appendix 1 species on the Convention on Internationally Traded Endangered Species, prohibiting its trade internationally.

At the national level, trade is prohibited by the Endangered and Protected Species Act 2002. They are the most common turtle species in Fiji and have been recorded from much of the Fiji waters; however, the nesting sites are now restricted to small islets and cays. It has been suggested that the commercialization of the turtle trade has led to the demise of the populations in Fiji, and the Pacific. Thousands of turtles have been harvested for their meat and for their shells in the past.

