



# Amazing Animals Fact sheets

## Tortoises and Turtles

Turtles and Tortoises are common name for reptiles that make up the order Chelonia, (also known as Testudines), recognized by a hard shell that encloses the internal organs of the body. Turtles are ancient life forms. The earliest fossils recognized as turtles date from the Triassic period, about 200 million years ago; thus, turtles were in existence prior to the emergence of the great dinosaur groups. Unlike dinosaurs, however, turtles have continued to adapt and flourish.



### Freshwater Turtle

Broad-shelled river turtles are one of Australia's largest freshwater turtle species, reaching a carapace length of 50cm. Looking at an adult specimen it's hard to imagine them small enough to hatch from an egg. These long necked turtles are hatched from hard-shelled eggs (typically reptiles lay soft leathery eggs) deposited by the mother in the sandy banks of our fresh water turtle pond where they may have spent up to an entire year incubating!

#### Habitat

Broad-shells are quite common throughout river systems and dams in Queensland and New South Wales and will feed on anything they can catch. Their long, snake-like neck aids in ambushing prey.

#### Diet

Fish, insects, frogs and some small reptiles are their preferred food sources.

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