

There are actually seven different species of marine turtles in the world! You can find five of them in Myanmar!

This one you see here is called a hawksbill turtle. Check out its beak! It looks just like a hawk doesn't it? Pointy and narrow, perfect for finding and eating their food in the coral reefs.



Oh wow. Can I have a closer look at her?

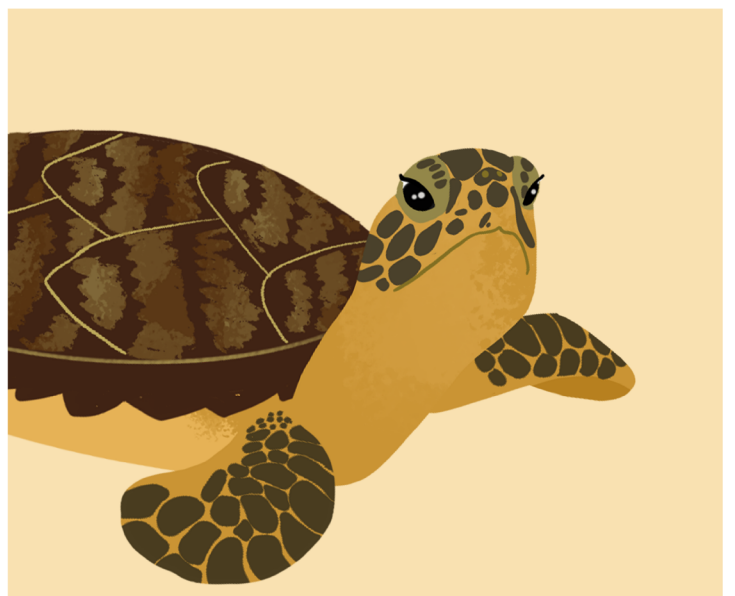


I'm sure you can if you ask the turtle nicely. So happy to see your young curious mind, little Thazin.

Thank you Aunty Kalayar. See you later!

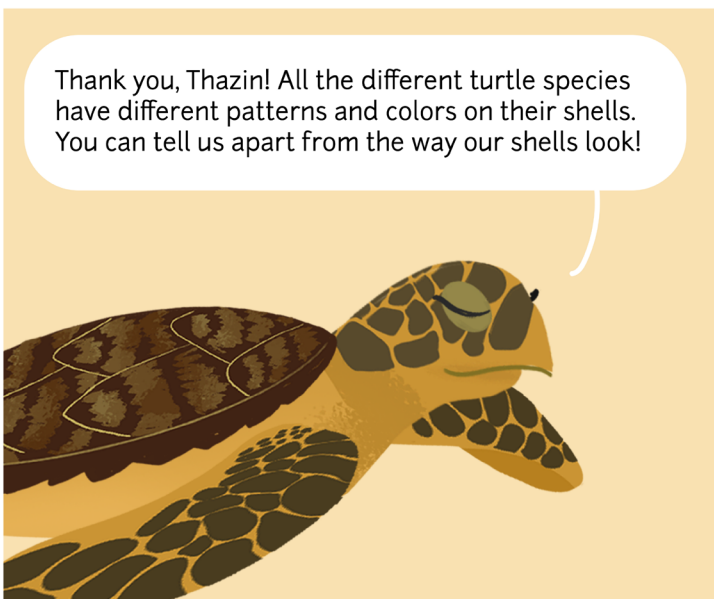


Hi there, Aunty Turtle!

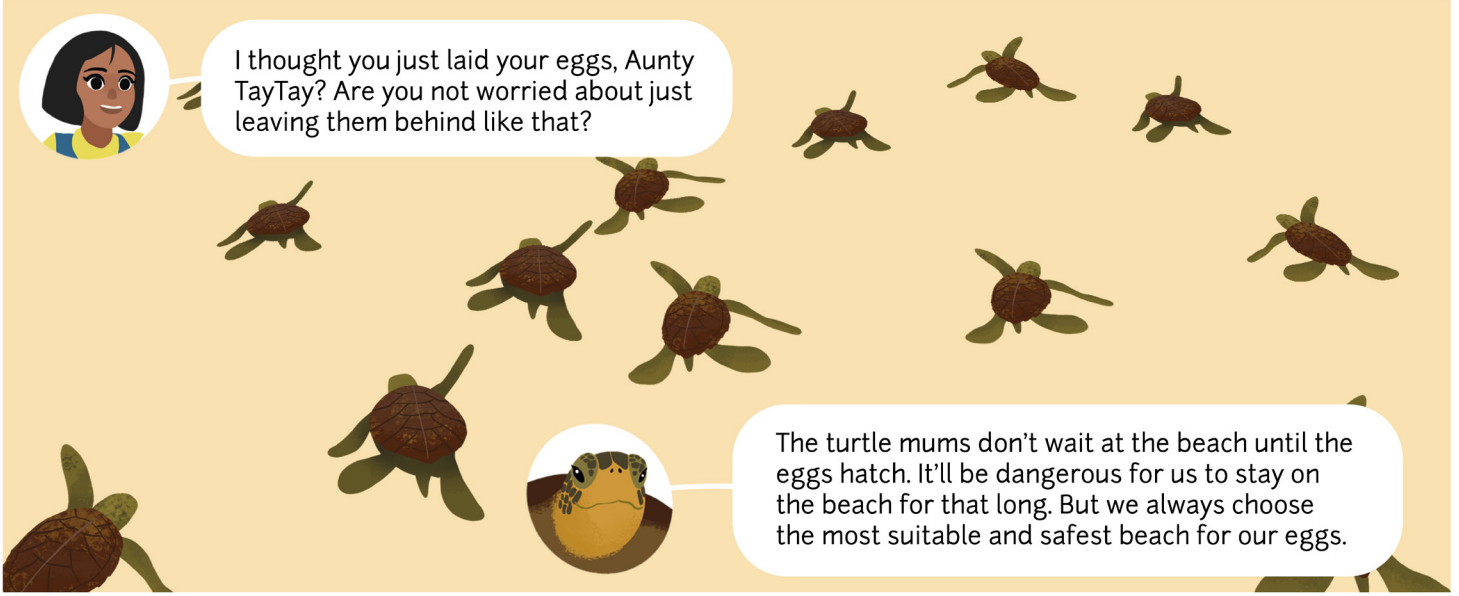


Disclaimer: Please do not approach turtles in the wild. Please leave at least 3m / 10feet between you and the turtle to avoid stressing them.

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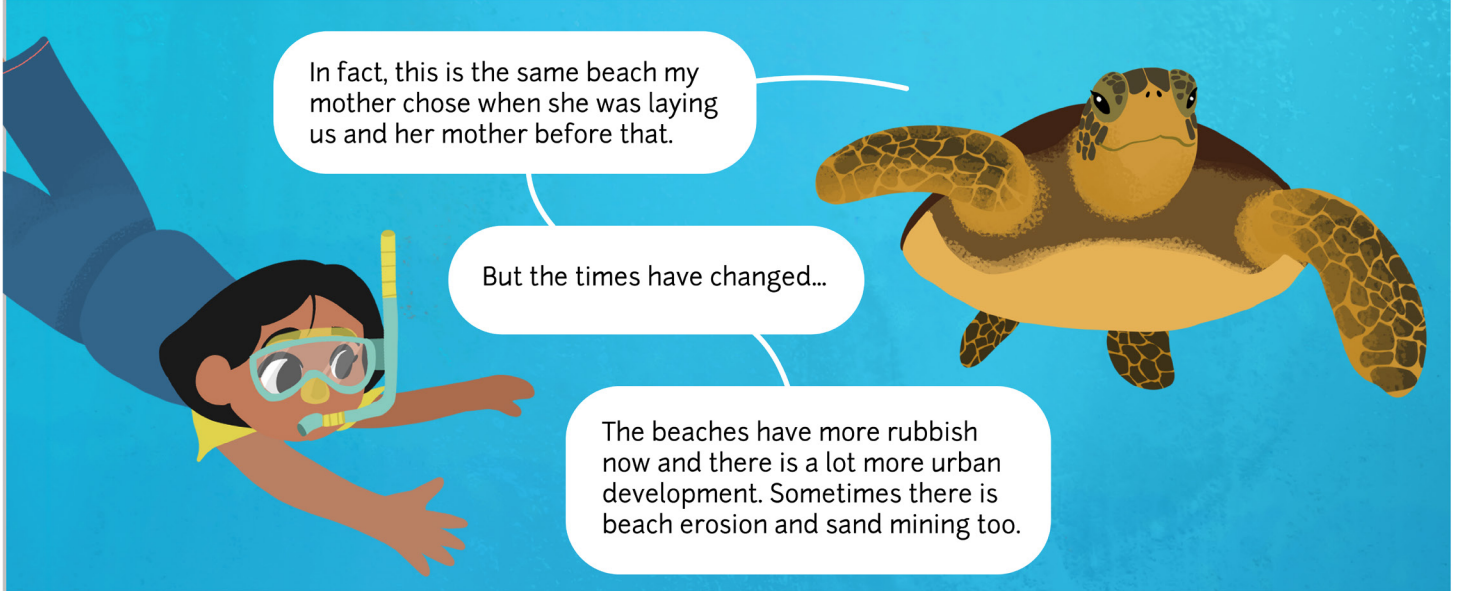


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I thought you just laid your eggs, Auntie TayTay? Are you not worried about just leaving them behind like that?

The turtle mums don't wait at the beach until the eggs hatch. It'll be dangerous for us to stay on the beach for that long. But we always choose the most suitable and safest beach for our eggs.



In fact, this is the same beach my mother chose when she was laying us and her mother before that.

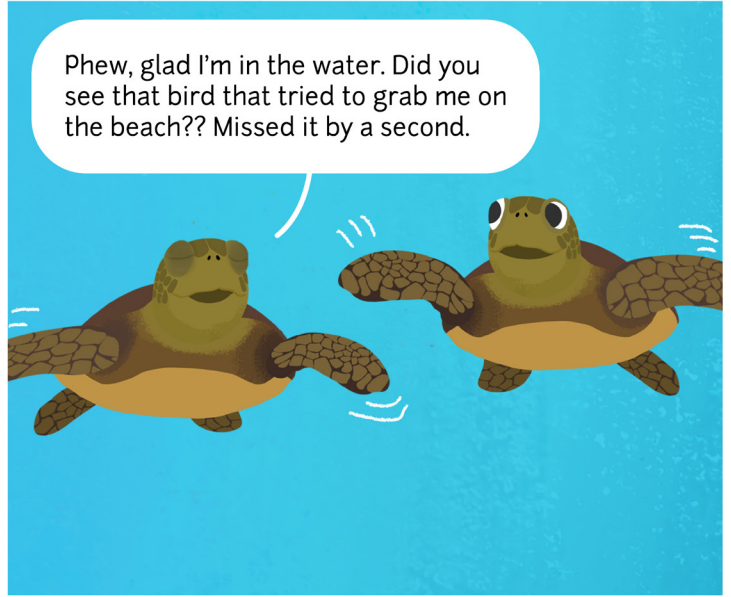
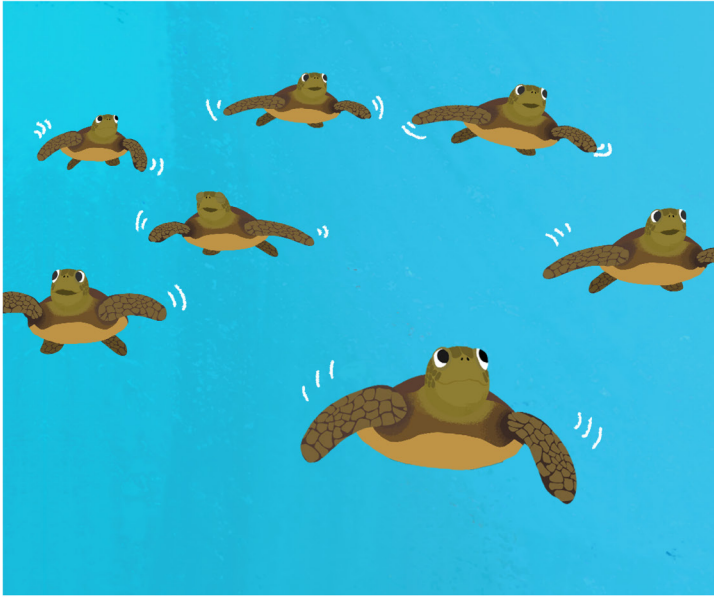
But the times have changed...

The beaches have more rubbish now and there is a lot more urban development. Sometimes there is beach erosion and sand mining too.

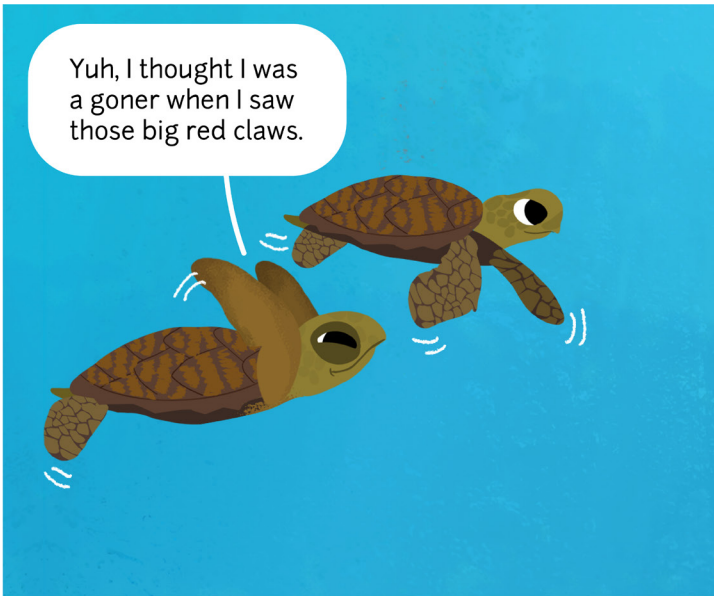


So your mum and your mum's mum must have known this beach was the safest for the baby turtles to hatch!

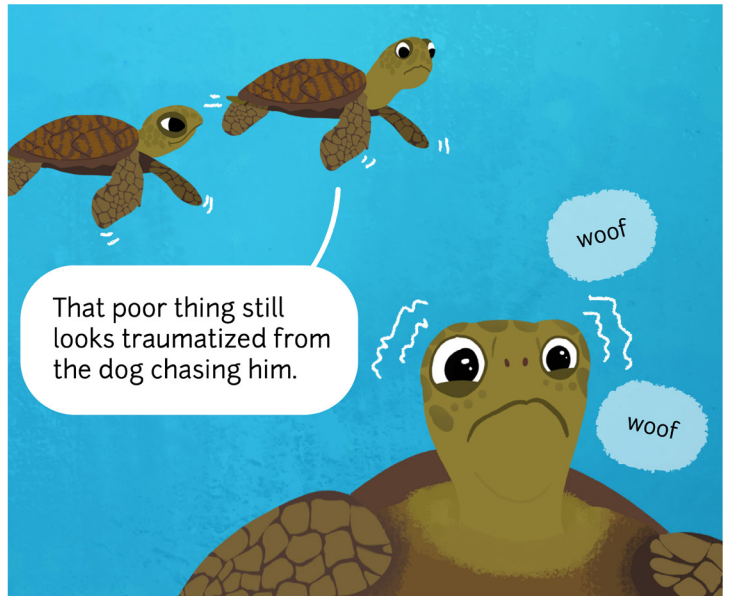
Yes. My baby girls will also come back to this beach to lay their eggs when they are all grown up too. That is why I hope this beach will be protected when it's their turn to nest.



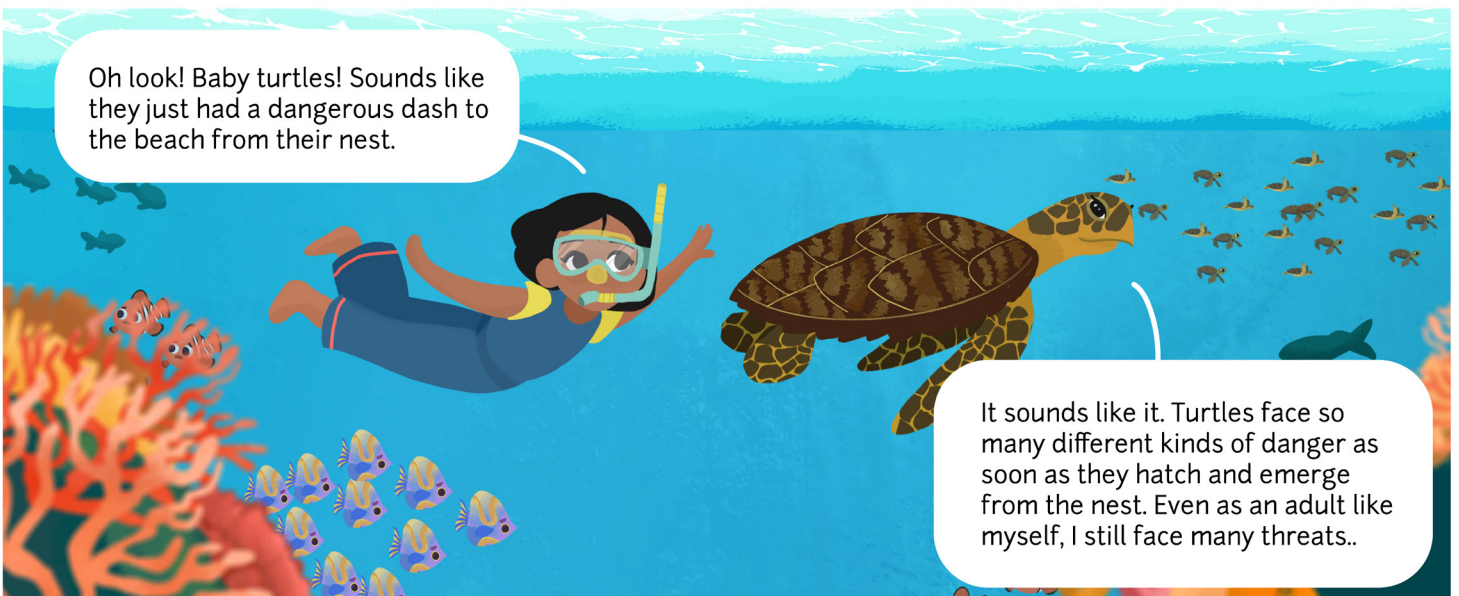
Phew, glad I'm in the water. Did you see that bird that tried to grab me on the beach?? Missed it by a second.



Yuh, I thought I was a goner when I saw those big red claws.

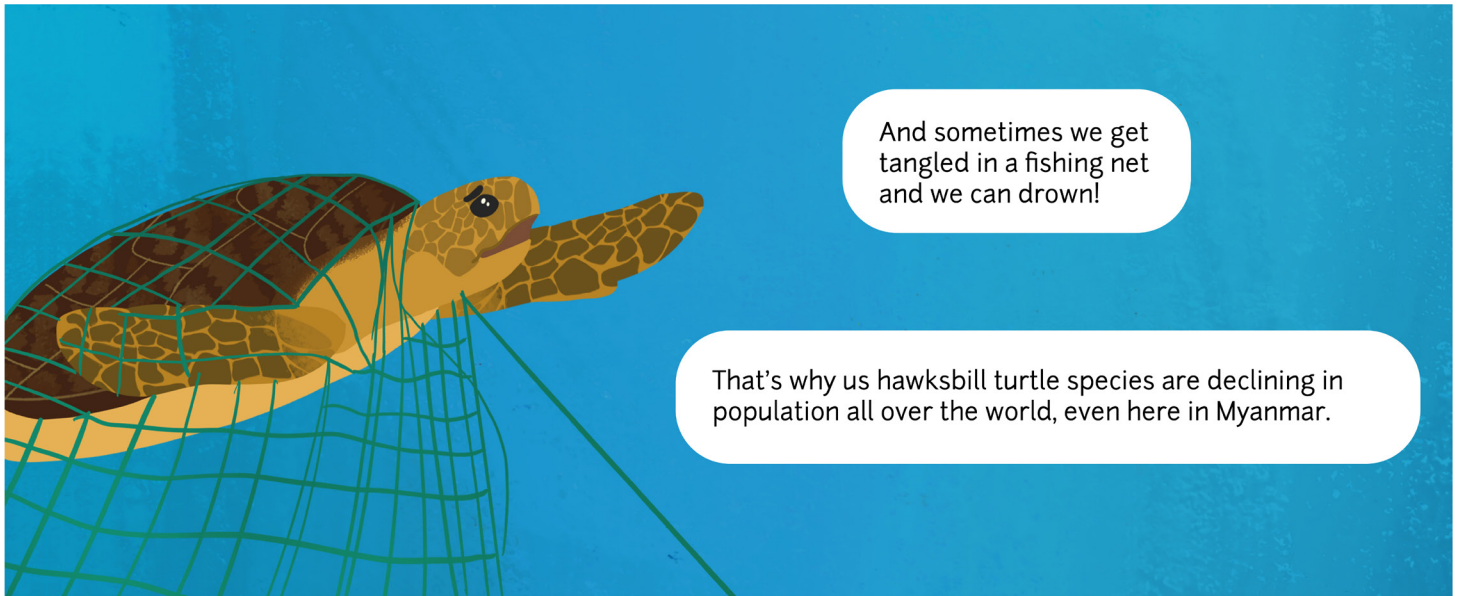


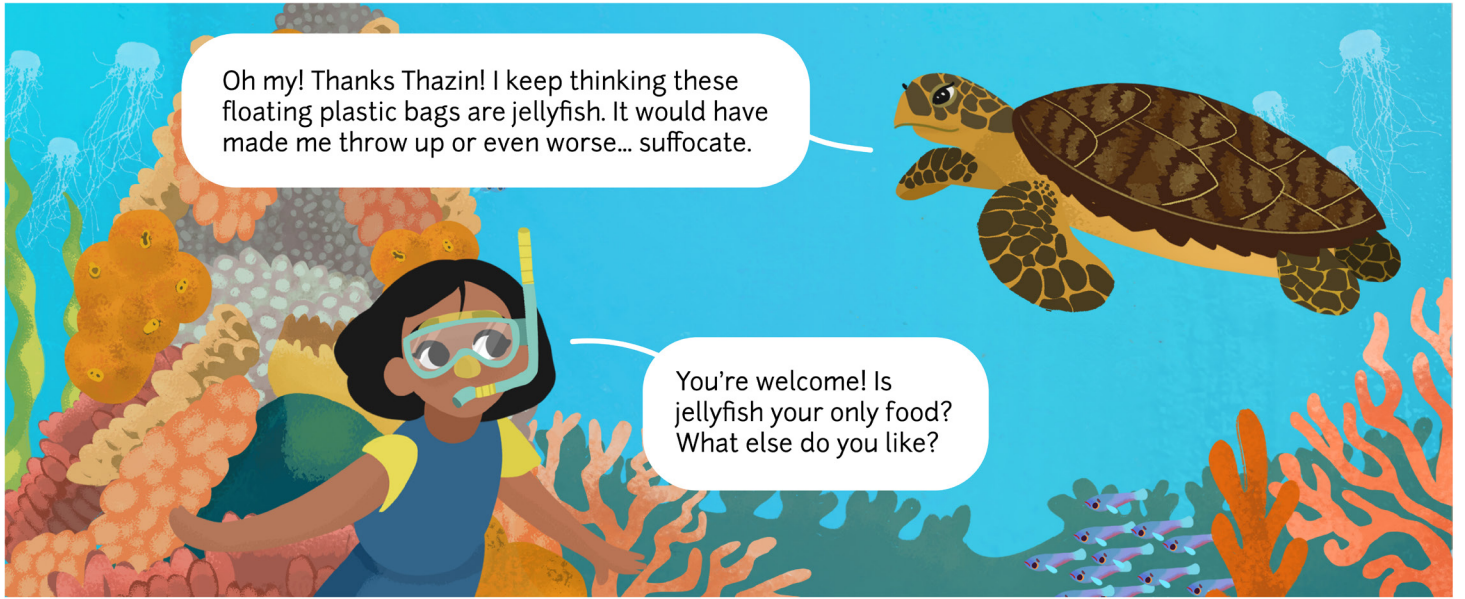
That poor thing still looks traumatized from the dog chasing him.



Oh look! Baby turtles! Sounds like they just had a dangerous dash to the beach from their nest.

It sounds like it. Turtles face so many different kinds of danger as soon as they hatch and emerge from the nest. Even as an adult like myself, I still face many threats..



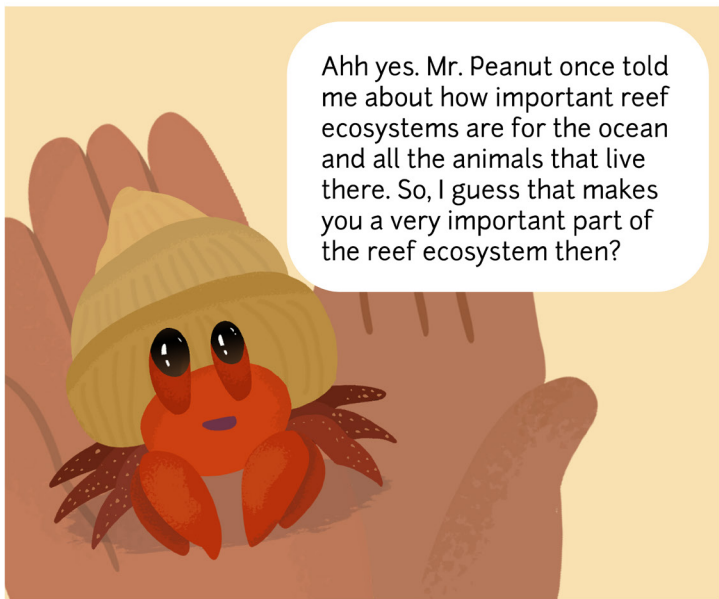


Oh my! Thanks Thazin! I keep thinking these floating plastic bags are jellyfish. It would have made me throw up or even worse... suffocate.

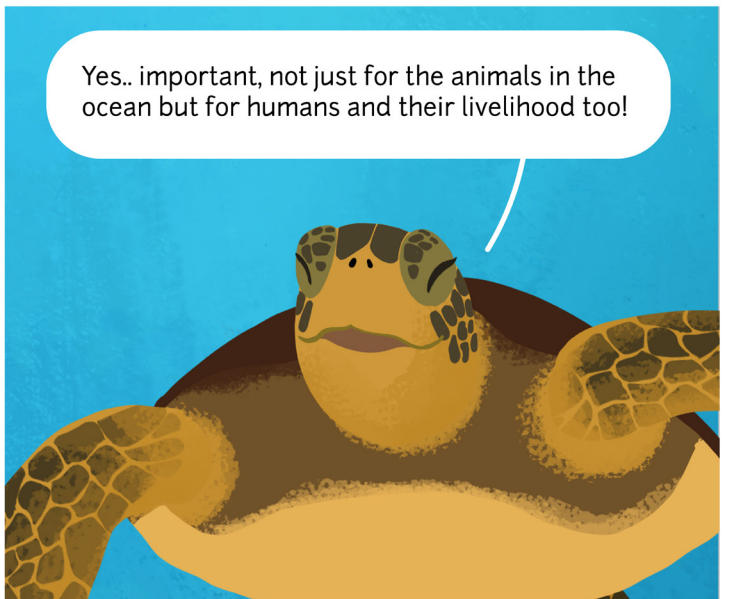
You're welcome! Is jellyfish your only food? What else do you like?



We like eating sea sponges in the coral reefs too! Lots of it actually! We are basically reef gardeners. We help keep the reef ecosystem healthy for all the other fish living in the coral reefs.



Ahh yes. Mr. Peanut once told me about how important reef ecosystems are for the ocean and all the animals that live there. So, I guess that makes you a very important part of the reef ecosystem then?



Yes.. important, not just for the animals in the ocean but for humans and their livelihood too!



Speaking of ecosystems... here they come!



These cleaner fish are all here to eat the algae and dead skin off my shell to keep me all new and shiny and clean!



They get a belly full of food! And I get a super smooth shell to swim faster! We all rely on each other this way.



Hi there, Tay Tay!! Looks like you need a proper clean on that shell of yours! We're going to give you a deep clean today!



Thank you so much for allowing me to learn about you, Aunty Tay Tay! I hope you and your children get to live a long and healthy and plastic free life in these reefs!