



**NOAA  
FISHERIES**

# The Longest Journey: How Western Pacific Leatherback Turtles Reach the U.S. West Coast



**7,000-mile migration across the Pacific**

Leatherbacks spend up to a year swimming across the Pacific Ocean, a circuit they may repeat several times in their lifetimes.

The turtles nest on sandy beaches in Indonesia, but still suffer from poaching, hunting, and habitat loss.

**The journey begins & ends on the nesting beaches of Indonesia.**

Winter-nesting turtle migration to southern hemisphere foraging grounds

AUSTRALIA

The United States protected leatherbacks by closing a large area off the West Coast to gillnet fishing when turtles are present.



During these migrations, many leatherbacks are caught and killed by fishing vessels from many nations.

Leatherbacks forage off the West Coast for three to five seasons, swimming near the coast in summer and fall and migrating to warmer waters in winter. They feed largely on jellyfish.

