

SKATE LIFE CYCLE

BE SAFE ON THE BEACH!

Tell someone where you're going.
Check tide times.
Use a stick/boot to rummage in seaweed.
Respect wildlife by following the Seashore Code
and don't take live specimens home.

6

Once the young have absorbed the yolk sac, the skate emerges from between the horns of the upper field of the eggcase and hatches as a miniature version of the adult.

5

Developing embryos pump sea water into the eggcase by beating their tails.

3

Small slits open up along the horns allowing oxygenated sea water to enter.

2

Eggs are anchored onto the seabed using mucus filaments. The embryo feeds on a yolk sac. Incubation periods vary (approximately 5 months to over one year) according to species.

4

As the embryo grows, its pectoral fins fold up over its back and its tail curves up the side of the eggcase.

7

The juvenile skate will continue to develop to adulthood.

8

Once mature, the now adult female will produce her own eggs and the process is repeated.

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Eggs are laid (often in pairs, one from each ovary) by the female at daily or weekly intervals.

The process of laying eggs that hatch outside the female is known as oviparity. True skates produce eggcases.

Empty eggcases are picked up by currents and carried inshore.

The eggcases of eight species of skate and two species of shark are commonly found along the UK coastline, where they are known as mermaid's purses.