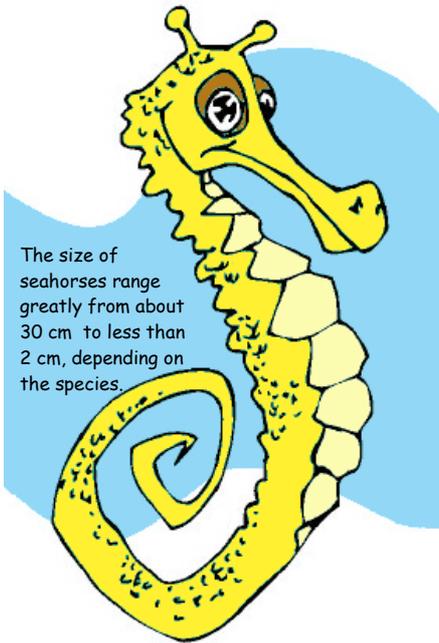


Seahorses



The size of seahorses range greatly from about 30 cm to less than 2 cm, depending on the species.



Courtesy of www.seahorseaquariums.com

Some smaller seahorse species can live for only one year but most species live for on average 6 years.

Where they live & how many are there?

Seahorses are found in almost every sea and ocean in the world from as far north as Ireland to as far south as Tasmania. Seahorses tend to like sea grass beds and areas where they can hang on in the current, in fact a seahorse may hang to the same piece of seaweed for its entire life. There are between 30 and 40 species worldwide with most being found in the Indo-Pacific region. New species continue to be found nearly every year.



Poor Swimmers

Seahorses are poor swimmers. They swim by beating their dorsal fin along their back between 30-70 times per second. Pectoral fins which appear as ears either side of the head are used to help the seahorse with stability and steering.

It must be love!

Seahorses pair for life. They perform an elaborate courtship dance every morning of their lives. The seahorse is the only animal in the world where the male gives birth. The female transfers her eggs into the males pouch which he then releases sperm to fertilise the eggs. Pregnancy varies from 14 days to 4 weeks. The number of juveniles born ranges from 50 to 1500 depending on the species. Less than one in a thousand will survive to adulthood in the wild. For more details about their lovelife, read *Captain Cockle's Log* on page 15.



This information is provided by Seahorse Aquariums in Dublin, the largest aquatic specialist shop in Ireland. Run by marine biologist Kealan Doyle and his team, it not only sells seashores but also offers a huge selection of fish and aquarium supplies. To read more about Kealan Doyle's work see page 7. You can also visit www.seahorseaquariums.com