

Locations where fossils have been found

# Archelon

## Common Name:

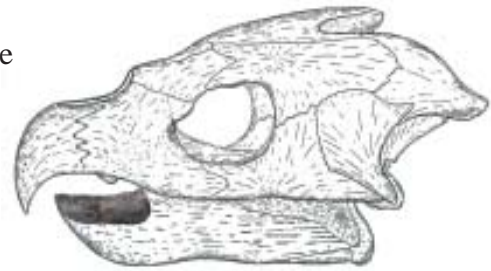
Giant Cretaceous sea turtle

## Classification:

**Class:** Reptilia

**Order:** Reptilia

**Family:** Protostegidae



Lower jaw (shaded) of *Archelon* superimposed on diagram of *Archelon* skull. The only *Archelon* specimen found in North Dakota was found by Peter Mack on the Bev and Orville Tranby property near Cooperstown. They donated it to the State Fossil Collection. Skull is 30 inches wide.

## Description:

*Archelon* was one of the sea turtles that lived in the Western Interior Seaway that covered North Dakota during the Cretaceous. *Archelon* grew to lengths of 15 feet. Sea turtle fossils are extremely rare in North Dakota. These turtles laid their eggs on land and were vulnerable to attacks by predators, such as predatory dinosaurs at those times.



*Archelon* turtles on a Pierre Sea shore during the Cretaceous escaping from a *Tyrannosaurus rex*. Painting by Mark Hallett.