

TOILET PAPER ROLL MERMAID PURSE

Introduction: Participants can use the attached guide to create their own “mermaid purse” or egg case for either a shark or skate. If possible, have real egg cases available for reference.

Background:

Shark and skate egg cases are actually the tough, leathery protective capsules for shark and skate embryos. They're called "mermaids' purses" because sailors historically believed these items, often found washed up on beaches after storms, were the lost handbags of mythical mermaids. Their long tendrils are used to anchor them to seaweed and contributed to this folkloric name.

Materials:

- Toilet roll or paper towel tube
- Cut outs of baby sharks and rays (optional)
- Scissors
- Pipe cleaners (for shark egg cases, optional)
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils, or paint

Directions:

Step 1: Use the guide to draw the “egg case” shape of the species you wish to make on both ends of the cardboard tube.

Step 2: Cut the ends of the rolls along those lines.

**Safety first! Be careful with the scissors. Let an adult do step 2, if needed.*

Step 3: Color the toilet roll and all the pieces. Use the guide to help you decide which colors match the appropriate species’ egg cases. Remember to color the baby shark or ray.

Step 4: If using pipe cleaners to represent tendrils, you can attach those with tape or hot glue at the ends of the tube. Twist the pipe cleaner around a pencil or finger to “curl” them

Step 5: If including “baby sharks or rays” in your project, you can now insert the cut-out into the tube, and seal one end with tape or staples. You now have your own Mermaid Purse!

