

TURTLES OF ONTARIO IDENTIFIER

Illustrations are half life size.



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Stinkpot (Musk)

Sternotherus odoratus

- 5.1-11.5 cm; record 13.7 cm
- Small turtle with smooth, light olive to black, high-domed, narrow carapace
- Plastron is small, yellow-brown and gives little protection to legs; a hinge runs across the front of the plastron allowing it to close upward to protect the head
- Two light stripes on each side of the head
- Barbels (fleshy projections) on chin and throat
- Named for musky odour produced when handled (also known as musk turtle)
- Lays 2-5 oval, white, hard-shelled eggs
- THREATENED (COSEWIC); THREATENED (OMNR)



Spotted

Clemmys guttata

- 9-11.5 cm; record 12.7 cm
- Smooth black carapace with bright yellow or orange spots; spots fade in older turtles
- Plastron yellow-orange with large black blotch on each scute
- Males have tan chin and brown eyes; females have yellow chin and orange eyes
- Head, neck, limbs and tail are grey to black with yellow spots; inside of legs washed with orange
- Lays 3-8 oval, leathery textured eggs
- ENDANGERED (COSEWIC); ENDANGERED (OMNR)



Midland painted

Chrysemys picta marginata

- 11.5-14 cm; record 19.5 cm
- Females larger than males
- Smooth, olive to brownish-grey carapace with orange-red margins
- Yellow plastron with dark central blotch
- Neck, legs and tail striped with red and yellow; yellow blotch behind each eye
- Males have very long nails on front feet
- Often seen basking on logs
- Lays 3-14 oval, white, smooth-shelled eggs



Wood

Glyptemys insculpta

- 14-20 cm; record 23.4 cm
- Brown or greyish-brown, rough, heavily sculptured carapace, often with a central keel or ridge and raised concentric growth rings on each scute
- Rear margin of carapace serrated
- Plastron is yellow with black squares
- Head black; skin brown; adults with orange or yellow on neck and legs
- Found on land (the most terrestrial turtle in Ontario) and in or near streams and wet meadows
- Lays 4-12 oval, white, thin-shelled eggs
- THREATENED (COSEWIC); ENDANGERED (OMNR)

Western painted

Chrysemys picta bellii

- 9-18 cm; record 25.1 cm
- Light, irregular lines on olive to brownish-grey carapace
- Yellow plastron with large, dark, irregular shaped central blotch
- Often seen basking on logs
- Lays 3-20 oval, white, smooth-shelled eggs



Blanding's

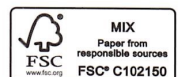
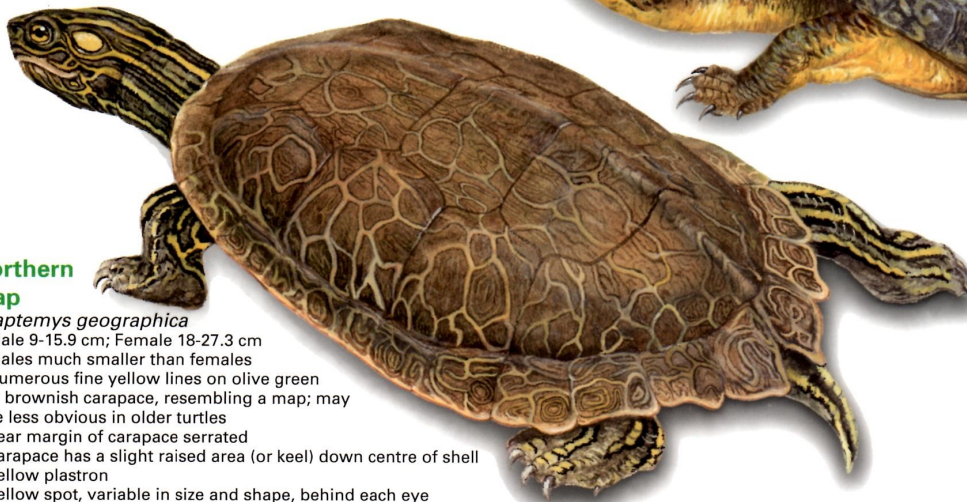
Emydoidea blandingii

- 12.5-18 cm; record 27.4 cm
- Carapace black to greyish-brown with numerous yellowish spots or streaks
- Plastron has a flexible grooved hinge that allows lower shell to close upward to protect head and legs
- Bright yellow on chin and throat
- Protruding eyes
- Domed shell obvious while basking on logs, rocks, or clumps of vegetation
- Lays 6-11 oval, dull white, hard-shelled eggs
- THREATENED (COSEWIC); THREATENED (OMNR)

Northern Map

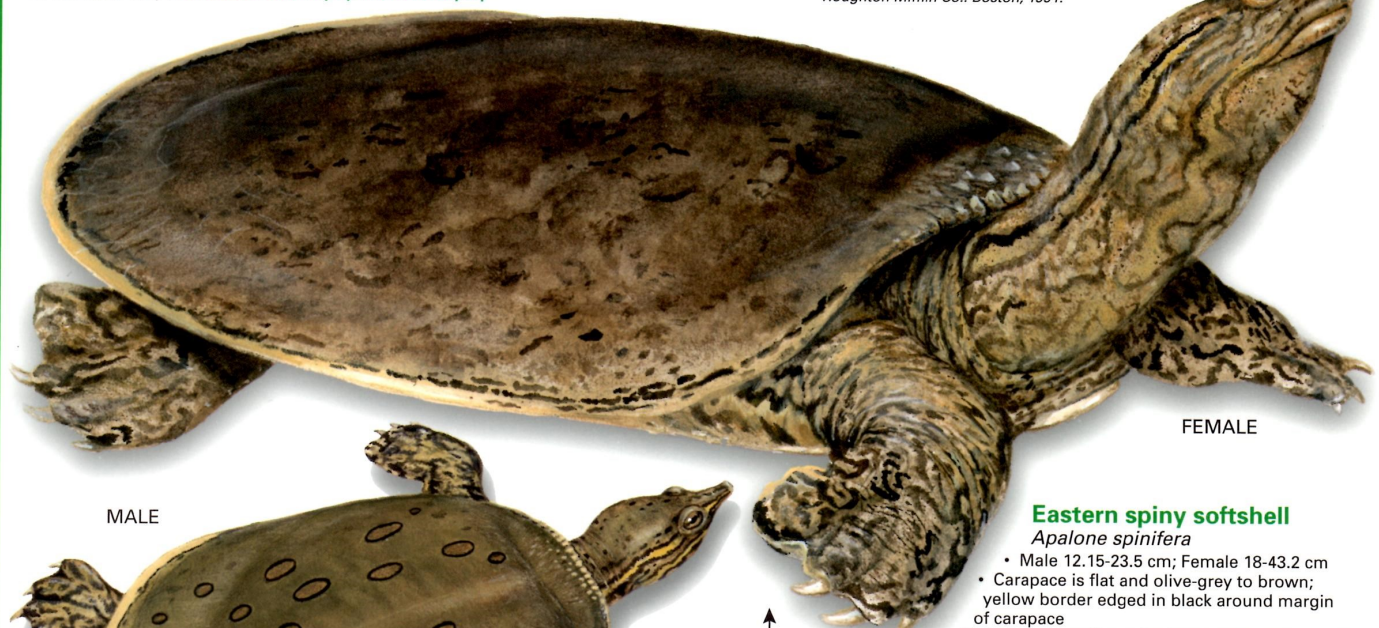
Graptemys geographica

- Male 9-15.9 cm; Female 18-27.3 cm
- Males much smaller than females
- Numerous fine yellow lines on olive green to brownish carapace, resembling a map; may be less obvious in older turtles
- Rear margin of carapace serrated
- Carapace has a slight raised area (or keel) down centre of shell
- Yellow plastron
- Yellow spot, variable in size and shape, behind each eye
- Head and limbs may have light and dark yellow stripes
- Lays 10-16 oblong, parchment-shelled eggs
- SPECIAL CONCERN (COSEWIC); SPECIAL CONCERN (OMNR)



Turtles in Ontario are protected under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act. If you see a turtle, please do not disturb it or remove it from its habitat. If you see a turtle wandering over land in spring or early summer, it is most likely a female about to lay her eggs. Watch it, love it, but leave it! We all have a role to play in protecting wetland habitat and turtle nesting areas. Seven of eight Ontario turtles are currently at risk. Observations help to identify important turtle habitats. Submit sightings to Ontario Turtle Tally at torontozoo.com/adoptapond/TurtleTally.asp

These turtles are not found in all Ontario regions. Consult a field guide for maps of turtles in your area. The size of turtles includes U.S. populations as listed in: Roger Conant and Joseph T. Collins, *A Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Eastern and Central North America*, 3rd edition. Houghton Mifflin Co.: Boston, 1991.



FEMALE



MALE

same species

Eastern spiny softshell

Apalone spinifer

- Male 12.15-23.5 cm; Female 18-43.2 cm
- Carapace is flat and olive-grey to brown; yellow border edged in black around margin of carapace
- Males and juvenile turtles have large yellow spots outlined in black; females have brownish blotches
- Small tubercles or spines on edge of shell above neck
- Two dark bordered, light yellow lines on each side of head
- Very long neck; tubular "pig like" snout
- Often buries itself in sand or mud
- Lays 12-18 round, white, hard-shelled eggs
- THREATENED (COSEWIC); THREATENED (OMNR)



Snapping

Chelydra serpentina

- 20.3-36 cm; record 49.4 cm
- 4.5-16 kg; record 32 kg snapping turtle once lived at Toronto Zoo
- Carapace is light brown to black
- Young turtles have three longitudinal keels on carapace, carapace of older turtles is almost smooth
- Plastron is yellowish, small, and cross-shaped; legs and skin not well protected
- Large head, two barbels on chin; rounded tubercles on neck
- Head, limbs and tail are brown
- Tail is long; same length or longer than carapace with "dinosaur-like" triangular scales projecting from the upper side
- Lays 20-40 round, ping-pong ball-like eggs
- SPECIAL CONCERN (COSEWIC); SPECIAL CONCERN (OMNR)

Red-eared slider

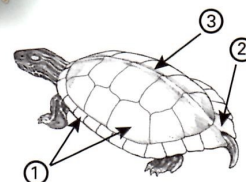
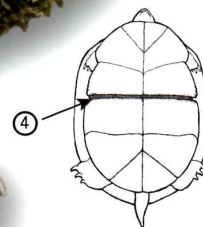
(not illustrated)

Trachemys scripta elegans

The red-eared slider is often sold in pet stores, but is not native to Ontario.

Do not release pet turtles into the wild.

They may carry diseases that threaten our native turtles, and they are not likely to survive.



- ① - scutes
- ② - serrated marginal scute
- ③ - longitudinal keel
- ④ - hinge on plastron