



WOOD TURTLE FIELD OBSERVATION FORM

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries needs your help in monitoring Wood Turtle (*Glyptemys insculpta*) populations. If you encounter a Wood Turtle, please provide the information requested below and mail or FAX this form to:

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
Attn: John Kleopfer
3801 J.T. Memorial Highway
Charles City, Virginia 23030
FAX 804-829-6788

If possible, send digital photos to: John.Kleopfer@dgif.virginia.gov

Distribution: The Wood Turtle is found primarily in the northeastern United States and parts of southeastern Canada, reaching the southern limit of its range in northern Virginia. In Virginia, it has been documented in Warren, Rockingham, Shenandoah, Frederick, Loudoun, Fairfax, Clark, and Page counties. It is not widely distributed, however, within these counties.

Species Descriptions (also see photos on the back of this sheet):

WOOD TURTLE: This semi-aquatic turtle usually is found in or near streams, but not in ponds, reservoirs, or lakes. The shell length of an adult Wood Turtle can reach 9 inches. The plastron (bottom-half of the shell) is NOT hinged and the carapace (top-half of the shell) is flattened. The legs and tail are usually reddish to orange in color. Females are sometimes less colorful.

EASTERN BOX TURTLE (*Terrapene carolina carolina*): This terrestrial (land-dwelling) species seldom is found in water, but is often misidentified as a Wood Turtle. The Eastern Box Turtle has a high domed shell and a hinged plastron, which allows for it to completely enclose itself. The shell length of an adult is rarely over 5 inches.

Your name: _____

Your address: _____

Your phone number (optional): _____

Location of observation (GPS coordinates, if possible). Include name of the nearest stream.

Comments: _____

THE WOOD TURTLE IS A PROTECTED SPECIES IN VIRGINIA: IT IS UNLAWFUL TO HARM, COLLECT, OR POSSESS THESE TURTLES.

WOOD TURTLE



Note the sculptured scales of the top of shell (carapace).

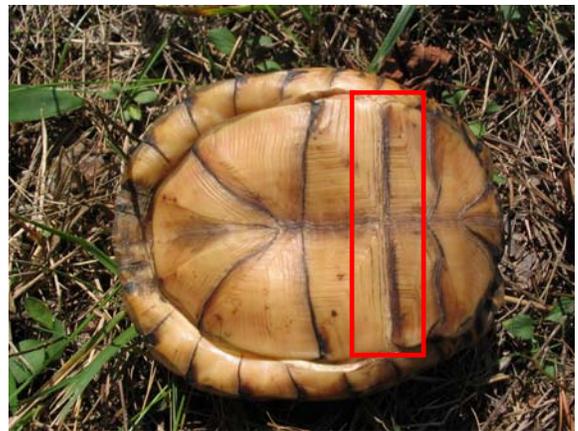


Bottom view (plastron) of a male Wood Turtle. The concave plastron is characteristic of a male. Note the distinct black markings and the brightly colored legs and tail.

EASTERN BOX TURTLE



Note the high domed shell and lack of sculptured scales. Males usually have an orange or yellowish face and legs and are more brightly colored in comparison to females.



Note the **hinged plastron** and no markings. The concave plastron is also characteristic of male box turtles.



The plastron of Eastern Box Turtles will often turn black.



Unlike Wood Turtles, box turtles can completely enclose themselves for protection.