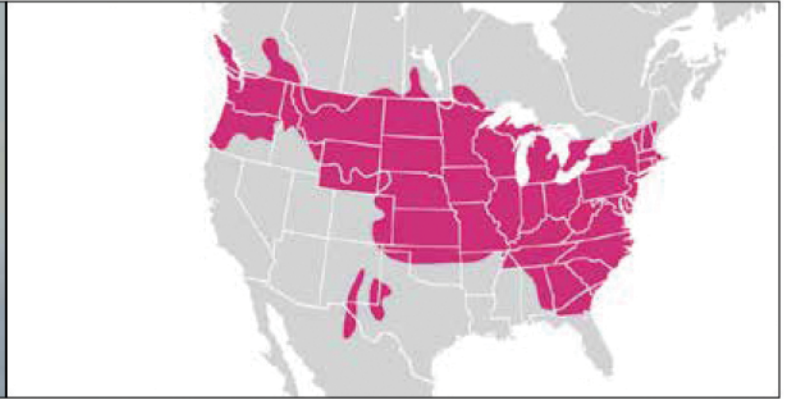


PAINTED TURTLE

updated March 2017



Range	One of the most common turtles in North America; found from southern Canada to northern Mexico
Habitat	Prefer shallow, weedy waters with mud bottom (ponds, lakes, marshes)
Diet (wild)	Feed mainly on plants, small animals, such as fish, crustaceans, aquatic insects, and some carrion
Diet (captivity)	
Description	Length: 4–10 inches. Low, smooth carapace (upper shell) is black or olive, with red markings along or under the margins. Plastron (lower shell) is yellow or orange with dark central blotch or figure. Head is yellow striped; neck and limbs are red or yellow striped.
Lifespan	Captivity: 30 years
Reproduction	In late May to early July, the female buries 4–20 soft shelled eggs in a sunny spot. Incubation takes 70–80 days, but hatchlings will often spend the winter in the nest and emerge in spring. Males have very long front claws used to tickle females during courtship. Males are sexually mature when their plastron is about 2.75–3.75 inches in length, usually at 3–5 years of age. At maturity, females can be twice as old (6–10 years) and have longer plastrons.
Behavior	Painted turtles are diurnal: during the day, they will bask in the sun, sometimes as many as 50 on one log, stacked on top of each other. At night they will rest on the bottom of a pond or on a partially submerged object such as a rock. In many areas, painted turtles hibernate during the winter months by burrowing into the mud and allowing their bodies to become very cold.
Our animals	1 female, 1 male. Born: 2006
Cool stuff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basking in the sun helps rid turtles of parasitic leeches. • Fossils show that painted turtles existed 15 million years ago. • Painted turtles are vigilant and will seek refuge in the water at the slightest sign of danger. A variety of predators, such as raccoons, otters, mink, and foxes, prey on turtles and their eggs. • As with many other reptile species, painted turtles frequently have bacteria living in their guts that can be harmful to humans but are a normal part of the turtles' gut flora. In particular, painted turtles can be source of the bacteria Salmonella. This is why it is illegal to sell small turtles as pets in the United States. • In the winter, painted turtles hibernate in the mud on pond bottoms. Their body temperature drops to approximately that of the surrounding water and their metabolism slows to a crawl. They won't come up for air until spring. Even though they don't take a breath, painted turtles still need oxygen, which they obtain by taking up oxygen from the surrounding water through their skin.

Phylum
ChordataClass
ReptiliaOrder
TestudinesFamily
EmydidaeGenus
Chrysemysspecies
C. picta