

Eastern Painted Turtle



These brightly colored turtles gain their name from colorful markings along the head, neck, and shell. They often can be observed basking on logs and rocks around a body of water and will quickly scoot into water if threatened or disturbed.

Painted turtles can live 60 years or more in the wild.

There is concern that native, wild painted turtles are facing competition for food and basking sites from non-native red-eared sliders that have been released into the wild by pet owners who no longer want to care for these exotic pets.

Habitat

Eastern painted turtles are common inhabitants of permanent ponds, the weed-choked shallow coves of large northern lakes, beaver ponds and farm ponds. They occasionally occur in the slow-moving sections of rivers. is found from Maine southward along the northeast coast to North Carolina, and then farther south it occurs inland in South Carolina and Georgia.

When things begin to freeze they swim to the muddy bottom of the pond and dig a burrow. They can hibernate without oxygen for months before temperatures rise enough to emerge again.

Diet

Eastern painted turtles are omnivorous and will eat aquatic plants such as elodea. They will get very excited about earthworms, crickets and other insects. They must swallow their food underwater. Turtle pellets are readily consumed in captivity.