

EASTERN BOX TURTLE

(*Terrapene carolina*)

NONNATIVE



Description: Small to medium turtle (up to 8 inches long) with a brown high dome-shaped carapace. May have extremely variable pattern of yellow or orange lines, spots, or blotches. The head and front feet have orange or yellow spots, but males often have red on the head, red eyes and a concave plastron. Females have yellow-brown eyes and a flat plastron.

Habitat: Terrestrial/semi-aquatic; native to the eastern and midwestern United States and Mexico. Can be found in woodlands, pastures, marshy meadows, and brushy grasslands.

Behavior: Omnivorous; eats insects, worms, crayfish, frogs, and many kinds of vegetation, but becomes more herbivorous with age. Activity is most common in the morning or after a rain. A box turtle regulates its body temperature by using burrows, ponds, or the shade of vegetation, etc. Hibernates during winter in burrows or under debris.

If you find one: If you find an eastern box turtle, it is a captive turtle that has either escaped or has been unlawfully released. For the benefit of the animal, please contact the [nearest Game and Fish office](#) or the Phoenix Herpetological Society for information and recommendations.