

LET'S TALK TURTLES



**GEORGIAN BAY
BIOSPHERE
MNIDOO GAMII**

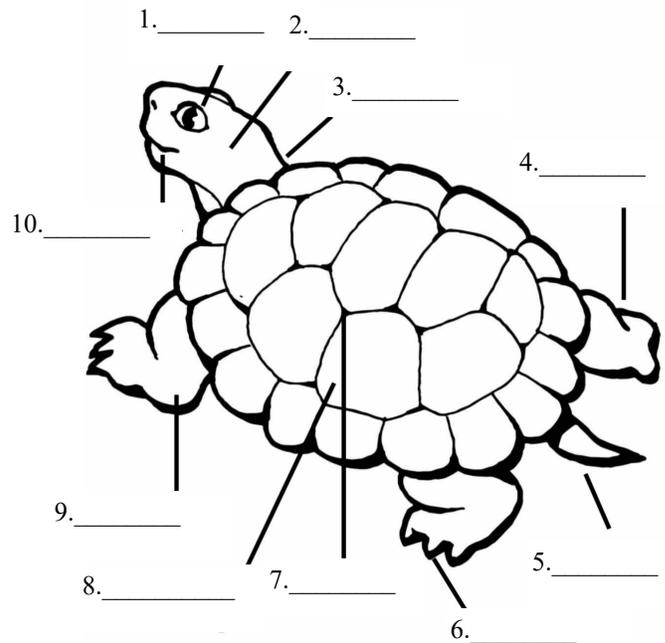
We are so lucky to share eastern Georgian Bay with many reptiles, including turtles! The oldest fossil record of turtles dates to 220 million years ago, when dinosaurs were alive! Today, there are 356 species of turtles and tortoises across the globe. Ontario has eight native species and in eastern Georgian Bay, we have six species.

English: *Turtle*
French: *Tortue*
Ojibwe: *Miskwaadesi* or
Miishkenh

Can you label each part of the turtle with the words in the Word Bank? Put the correct letter on each blank line and check your answers when you're done.

Word Bank

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| A. Carapace | F. Hind Leg |
| B. Claws | G. Mouth |
| C. Eye | H. Neck |
| D. Foreleg | I. Scutes |
| E. Head | J. Tail |



Activity 1. Who is that Turtle?

Although from a distance, the turtles of eastern Georgian Bay might look alike, they're actually very different from each other. Use the clues below and check out the Species at Risk List on www.gbbr.ca to determine who is who! Can you solve these puzzles without looking online?

Adult Length	Clues	Who Am I?
15 - 27cm	Black, smooth, high domed "helmet like" shell with yellowish flecks, also a bright yellow throat and chin.	A.
20 - 48cm	The largest turtle in Ontario but with the smallest plastron (or belly shell), top jaw has small hook, looks prehistoric!	B.
7 - 13 cm	Rare to see, has 2 yellow stripes along each side of its head and barbels (whisker-like) on chin and throat.	C.
12 - 14cm	Common to find, shell is broad, smooth and flat and olive to black in colour, red and yellow stripes on head, neck, and shell edges.	D.
10 -13cm	Rare to see, dark turtles with yellow 'polka' dots on their shell, head and limbs, underside often yellow or orange.	E.
13 - 27cm	Olive to brown coloured shell with yellow squiggly lines, yellow stripes cover the head and limbs, very shy!	F.

Activity 2. Build a Turtle Nest Protector

This one is a family project, you will need an adult to help! Check out the attached sheet for information about how to build and install a Turtle Nest Protector. The materials are simple, you could even make them as gifts for neighbours!

It is best to build a Turtle Nest Protector as soon as you can then keep it in your vehicle. This way, when you see a turtle laying eggs on private property or a private road, you will be ready!

Let Biosphere staff know if you've used your Nest Protector! We'd love to see pictures emailed to kids@gbbr.ca.



Activity 3. Traditional Shell Calendar

Anishinaabe and the Haudenosaunee people, as well as many other First Nations, use the back of a turtle's shell as a lunar calendar in their teachings.

The pattern of scales on a turtle's back matches the numbers which define the lunar calendar. There are 28 scales forming a circle around the edge, the same number of days between full moons.

The center of the shell has thirteen large scales (also called scutes), the same number of moons.

Number the scales on the turtle shell. See if you can use it as your calendar!

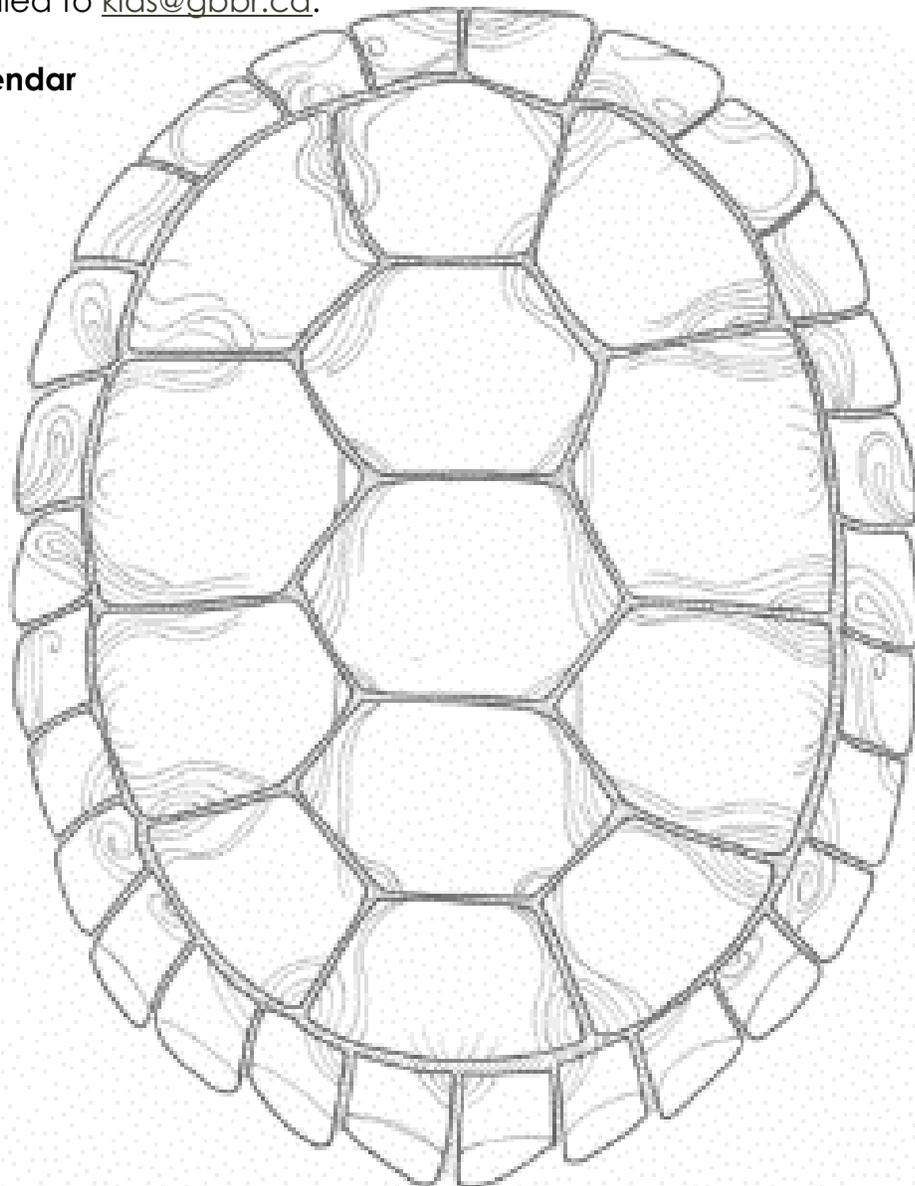


Image Credit: Turtle Island Conservation

Find an injured turtle?

The Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre (OTCC) is a turtle hospital that treats, rehabilitates, and releases injured turtles. Call 705-741-5000 or visit ontarioturtle.ca.



ONTARIO TURTLE
CONSERVATION CENTRE