

# Common Map Turtle

**Scientific Name:** *Graptemys geographica*

**Class:** Reptilia

**Order:** Testudines

**Family:** Emydidae



Maximum length about 11 inches. Males are much smaller than females, with a maximum length of about 5.5 inches. The shell is moderately low and flattened, with a central keel. The carapace is smooth, with a slightly serrated rear margin, and a reticulate pattern of light lines on an olive background. The head and legs are olive to dark brown with light stripes. There is nearly always a somewhat elongated spot behind the eye.

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## Range

Northeastern United States, as far south as Virginia, West Virginia and Tennessee

## Habitat

Prefers rivers and quiet backwaters, sometimes large bodies of water, such as lakes.

## Gestation

Approximately 90 days

## Litter Clutch

9 to 17 eggs

## Behavior

This turtle is not especially timid or aggressive. If pursued in water they seek concealment in bottom vegetation, or rely on their speed in swimming, which is considerable. In the spring they spend most of the day basking in the sun, but in warmer weather they head for deeper water. At the approach of winter, they head for shallow water again. They seem to have a reluctance to burrow into the mud, as they are quite often stranded on shore when the water has frozen over

## Reproduction

Mating is usually in April, although occasionally in the fall. Egg laying season lasts from late May until July, with most individuals depositing eggs in June. Females will wander for long distances inland, searching for suitable nesting places, preferring soft, ploughed soil or clear, dry sand. The nest is excavated to a depth to which the hind foot will conveniently reach. The eggs are ellipsoidal in shape, of a dull white color, and have a soft, easily indented shell. An occasional nest remains intact throughout the winter, as newly hatched young ones are sometimes found in May or June.

## Wild Diet

Crayfish, snails, insects, mollusks, fish Zoo Diet Same, plus vitamin supplements