



Blanding's Turtle

Emydoidea blandingii



Brady

I was born on **September 9th, 2001** and first arrived at the Racine Zoo in 2002.

I am currently an off-exhibit animal and live behind the scenes. I am known to be quite curious and love to swim up to greet my keepers when they walk by or come to feed me my meals!

TURTLES AT A GLANCE



- My **shell** protects me when I feel threatened. I pull myself in when there is danger.
- The top of the shell is called a **carapace** and the bottom is called a **plastron**.

The shell is black and smooth; sometimes it is covered in yellow dots or streaks

Adult:
8-10 inches long
1-3 lbs



- There is a hinge on the bottom of my shell that allows me to **pull** my shell up to protect my head and neck.
- I have **webbed feet with sharp claws** to help me swim and dig.



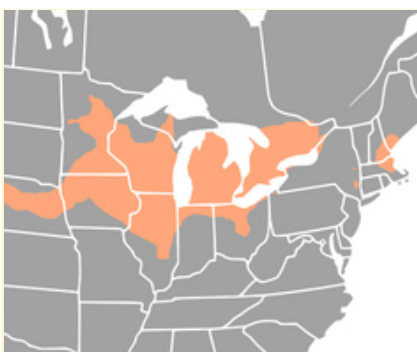
Bright yellow chin and throat



- Instead of teeth, I have a **sharp beak**. This allows me to **chew, bite, and tear** into my food.
- In the wild, I like to eat **crayfish, snails, insects, frogs, and fish**, as well as vegetation and berries.

Avg. life expectancy in native habitats and in human care:
70- 77 years

WHERE ARE NATIVE BLANDING'S TURTLE HABITATS LOCATED?



Blanding's turtles can be found throughout portions of Canada into many parts of the United States. They prefer to inhabit various aquatic habitats including wetlands, slow-moving streams, and nearby uplands. They are semi-terrestrial and will often move throughout wetlands areas during the "active" season.

Turtle Behavior

HIDING

Blanding's turtles can fully pull their head and legs into their shell. This protects them when they are feeling threatened.

If I do this, I may be feeling nervous or stressed!



BASKING

A reptile is cold blooded, so in the wild they will lay in the sun to warm themselves. At the zoo, our turtle has a heat lamp that mimics the sun.

I like to lay on top of my rock to sleep under my heat lamp.



SHEDDING

Just like other reptiles, a turtle needs to shed their skin to grow. This process also includes parts of their shell (that grow with them as they get bigger).

Shedding is a natural process that helps me grow big and strong.



SWIMMING

These semi-aquatic turtles spend majority of time underwater. They can be submerged and hold their breath for hours.

I can be underwater for a long time. Sometimes I will even sleep under water!

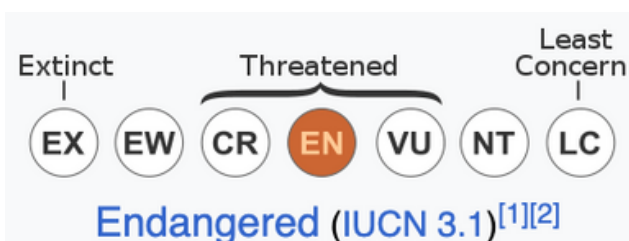


- Blanding's turtles and other reptiles go through **brumation** when temperatures lower in winter.
- They hibernate by burrowing in silt/sand on the bottom of a pond, bay, river, or other body of water to stay warm.
- When a female turtle lays it eggs, it will leave the water for a **nesting site on land**.
- Under the cover of night, the turtle will **dig a hole** and **lay** her eggs in a area **good drainage and little vegetation**. She will then return to the water.
- **Eggs** will hatch and the hatchlings will need to **fend for themselves**.

Turtle Conservation

They are threatened by **habitat loss** and **fragmentation**. These turtles travel long distances to find nesting grounds and aquatic habitats, but the presence of roads and cars makes it difficult and dangerous for them to cross.

Blanding's turtles are currently listed as **Endangered**. Native to Wisconsin, they are listed as **Special Concern**.



How can we help?

Turtles need to cross roads to get to their nesting sites. We can help by checking underneath our cars before driving off or through a wetland area.

We can help by ensuring our food waste and garbage goes in the trash. Throwing food and litter onto roads can attract animals, which can be dangerous for them and increase their chances of being hit by a car.