

eastern mud turtle *Kinosternon subrubrum*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Reptilia

Order: Testudines

Family: Kinosternidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The eastern mud turtle averages about three to four inches in length. Its carapace (upper shell) is smooth and some shade of brown. The plastron (lower shell) is double-hinged. A broad bridge connects the upper and lower shells. The head is spotted, mottled or streaked with yellow. This animal has barbels (whiskerlike projections) on its chin and neck.

BEHAVIORS

The eastern mud turtle may be found in the southern one-third of Illinois. It lives in shallow water with a soft bottom such as in marshes, ditches, swamps and sloughs. The common mud turtle is aquatic but often leaves the water. Mating occurs in spring. The female deposits one to six eggs in a nest dug in soil or vegetation in spring or early summer. This animal feeds while walking along the bottom of ponds and sloughs, eating mostly insects.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests; rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands

Prairie Habitats

none

© Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 2017. Biodiversity of Illinois.