



BOX TURTLE SIGHTING REPORT FORM

Please complete one form for each box turtle sighted.

Name: _____ Affiliation: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Species: Eastern Box Turtle Ornate Box Turtle Status: Dead Alive

Size – maximum plastron (lower shell) length: _____ in. mm.

Sex (see Information for characteristics): Male Female

Location: County: _____

Site (particular WMA, county road, etc.): _____

Distance & direction from nearest town: _____

Lat.-Long.: _____

Temperature: _____ F° C°

Rainfall amount during previous 24 hours: _____ in. mm.

Habitat where turtle was found (select one):

- native grassland
- improved grassland
- mixed grass/shrubs
- predominantly shrubland
- mainly deciduous woodland/forest
- mainly evergreen woodland/forest
- desert scrub
- agricultural land
- paved road
- unpaved road
- other: _____

Dominant habitat in surrounding area (select up to three):

- native grassland
- improved grassland
- mixed grass/shrubs
- predominantly shrubland
- mainly deciduous woodland/forest
- mainly evergreen woodland/forest
- desert scrub
- agricultural land
- other: _____

Dominant land use in surrounding area (select one):

- residential
- ranching
- agriculture
- timber production
- park land/preserve
- not in current use
- other: _____

Other notes: _____

Information on Box Turtles in Texas

Box Turtles (genus *Terrapene*) can be distinguished from other native Texas turtles by having a single hinge at the front of the lower shell (plastron), allowing them to fold it up and closing the front of the shell entirely; thus the common name of “box turtle.” Box turtles also have a hooked upper jaw (“beak”) that is lacking in other Texas turtles. The only other land turtle in Texas is the Texas Tortoise; it lacks any hinges on the plastron, has a head entirely covered with scales rather than having skin, and has a very rough upper shell (carapace). Male box turtles have red eyes (females yellow or golden), a longer tail with a thick base (females shorter and thinner), and a somewhat concave plastron (females have a flat one).

See reverse side for more information on the Eastern and Ornate Box Turtles.

Questions?

Contact (800) 792-1112 x8722, andy.gluesenkamp@tpwd.state.tx.us or leeann.linam@tpwd.state.tx.us

Please return form to:

Texas Nature Trackers
TPWD
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, TX 78744

For additional forms, visit:

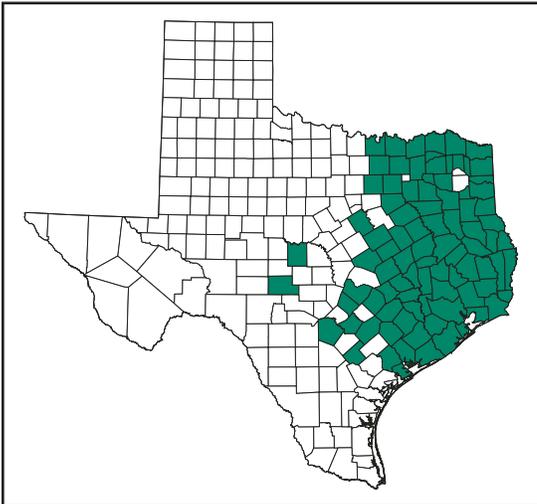
www.tpwd.state.tx.us/boxturtles/

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department maintains the information collected through this form. With few exceptions, you are entitled to be informed about the information we collect. Under Sections 552.021 and 552.023 of the Texas Government Code, you are also entitled to receive and review the information. Under Section 559.004, you are also entitled to have this information corrected. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744; 1-800-792-1112; www.tpwd.state.tx.us

Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina*)

The carapace of the Eastern Box Turtle is noticeably longer than wide, domed with a narrow keel lengthwise down the center, and has some flaring at the rear edge. The tallest point of the shell is well back towards the tail, so viewed sideways it'll be tallest at the back of the turtle. The carapace is light brown to tan with a few dark flecks on it. The plastron is normally solid yellow without any markings, although the edges individual plates may be dark. Orange, yellow or red spots sometimes visible on head and forelegs.

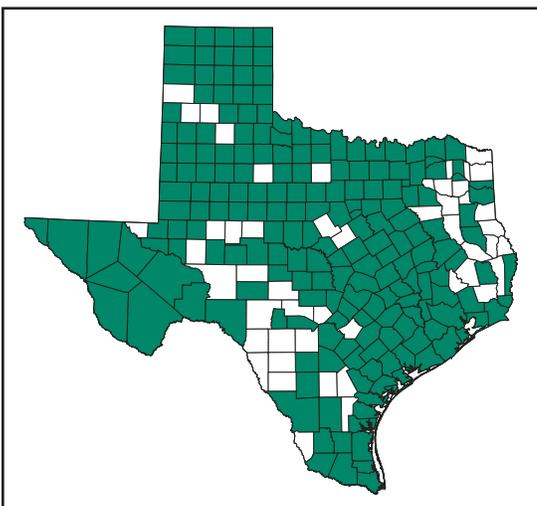
The subspecies in Texas (*triunguis*) almost always has **three toes** on each hind foot.



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Ornate Box Turtle (*Terrapene ornata*)

The carapace of the Ornate Box Turtle is relatively broad and oval, usually slightly flattened at the top, and lacks both a narrow keel lengthwise down the center and any flaring at the rear edge. The tallest point of the shell is just in front of the hinge on the plastron, so viewed sideways it'll be tallest at the front of the turtle. The carapace is dark with many yellow lines, sometimes grouped into "starbursts" radiating downward, and the plastron is dark brown or black with a pattern similar to the carapace. There are almost always **four toes** on each hind foot.



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