

This is a typical **Species Identification & Information Card** that shows how each species will be presented. These pages describe how the card is set up, how to interpret range maps, where to look for certain information or photos, and other tips on how to use this guide.

Colour Code
The background colour behind the species name denotes the taxonomic group, or species classification (e.g. mammals: brown, birds: blue, etc.)

Species Photo
Detailed photo(s) of the species that show distinguishing characteristics clearly.

Species Description
Distinguishing characteristics of the species are described, including shape, size, colour, male/female/ juvenile differences, and so on.

Page One

Common Name

Scientific Name
(Genus species)

Status

The status of species changes over time - listings in this guide are current as of January 2008 (check the web for current info). The National status is shown next to the Canadian flag and the Provincial status is shown next to the Nova Scotia flag.

National: SARA/COSEWIC Provincial: NS ESA

Range Description

Describes where the species is known or expected to occur in Nova Scotia (most also occur elsewhere in Canada or the world); sometimes includes the number of individuals estimated to exist in the population(s).

Blanding's Turtle
Emydoidea blandingii

STATUS
Endangered **R+R**
Endangered **R**

Population Range
Nova Scotia

Habitat
Freshwater wetlands (full-water streams, marshes, swamps, and coves). Found in dark, slow-moving waters, with muddy bottoms and dense aquatic vegetation, including sedges, spaghnum, sweetgum, cordgrass, and pickerel weed. They need exposed, gravelly or sandy areas for nesting in June, and permanent wet areas for overwintering.

Species Description
The Blanding's turtle has a high-domed, helmet-shaped and scuted shell that is dark grey (dry) to black with yellowish flecks (wet). It has a long neck and large yellow chin and throat. Males are dark grey with small yellow throat, and non-sexed. Full-grown adults are about 20-25 cm in length.

variance (back): dark grey, yellow flecks
plastron (belly): yellowish, big black blotches

Habitat Photos
Blanding's Turtles are found basking in the sun around wetlands in early April & May, along roadsides in June & July (when females are egg laying) and August & September (when males are traveling to overwintering sites), swimming in shallow water wetland throughout the spring, summer, or fall.

Range Map

Shaded where the species is known to occur: red (summer), blue (winter), or purple (year-round). Where species have been studied extensively we provide specific ranges. However, ranges are more general when less is known.

Note: Species may also be found outside the indicated range as new populations are discovered.

Habitat Description

The environment (physical/biological features) in which the species is found, sometimes including the community (other species) that usually occur in this habitat.

Habitat Photos

Detailed photos showing the habitat in which the species is found - we try and provide a range of angles and scales, showing the habitat from a distance, and close-up.

Key Identifiers

This space is for a detailed drawing(s) or photo(s) that show other key identifying characteristics.

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Sighting Locations

Describes where and when people are most likely to see the species, which may not be in typical habitat. Here, we also provide flowering times for plants, and sometimes specific locations where you might encounter the species.

Interesting Points

Engaging, exciting, curious, or otherwise interesting points are listed about the species.

Photos

This space is for photos that depict interesting points.

Threats To Survival

Reasons why the species is at risk are listed; some threats occur naturally (and are sometimes called “limiting factors” or “stressors”), but most are caused/inflicted by humans.

Similar Species

Other species that are similar in appearance are described; the ways that people often confuse the two are listed, and key distinguishing characteristics are provided.

Although you might think you’ve seen a Species at Risk, there are many “look-alikes” out there with which they can be confused. To confirm your sighting, be sure to take a photo!

Although we provide photos and descriptions of most similar species, some are not covered in this guide. Others are very difficult to distinguish. We recommend you consult other resources (field guides, on-line materials) to further assist your identification.

Interesting Points

- Hatchlings be able to survive freezing.
- Juveniles do not mature until their mid 20s, and individuals are believed to live longer than 80 years!
- They absorb oxygen through their skin in winter, and can survive over three months underwater!
- Females often return to nest in same place each year.

Similar Species

Painted Turtle
 Length: 10-15 cm; low dorsal shell, red-orange markings; head and feet all yellow-orange-plumage.

Wood Turtle
 Similar size (14-21 cm long); scaly, honey shell; orange markings around orange and underside of shell and limbs.

Snapping Turtle
 Much larger (up to 60 cm long); scaly, honey shell, jagged at the back; spiky tail, and large head; brown-grey colour.

Threats to Survival

- Habitat loss and degradation threatens all life stages.
- Predation (foxes, small mammals, birds) eat eggs, hatchlings and young juveniles.
- Road mortality (being run over by vehicles)
- Collection for the pet trade

How You Can Help

Learn how to recognize Blanding's turtles and report sightings. You see turtles, observe and appreciate but do not touch them. Drive carefully, keep your eyes open for turtles on the road, especially in June. Respect them and their habitat!

Contact, Information, Sighting Reports & Stewardship Opportunities

Contact: Parks Canada (Équipe/le Parc et National Marins) at 902-482-2710
 Info: www.pccanada.ca or www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca
 Sighting Reports: 1-866-737-3467 or sighting@pccanada.ca
 Stewardship: Equipe/le Parc et National Marins Stewardship Program, www.pccanada.ca/stewardship

Threats

Photos that depict the threats (dangers) that face the species may be shown here.

Stewardship

This space is for photos that depict stewardship opportunities, or people working to look after the species.

Photos

This space is for photos that depict the similar species.

How You Can Help

The ways that people, organizations, and communities can help are highlighted. This includes simple things you can do every day at home, to more advanced volunteer and stewardship opportunities.

Contact: Info for agencies/jurisdictions helping to recover this species at risk; contact them for general inquiries.

Info: References for additional information about the species.

Sighting Reports: The phone number and email address to which you can report sightings.

Stewardship: Contacts for volunteer and stewardship opportunities.