

# Conserving Blanding's Turtles at Great Meadows

## How You Can Help

### The Problem:

•Blanding's turtles (*Emys blandingii*), a "Threatened Species" in Massachusetts, are declining in our state. The local population at Great Meadows, Concord, is the third largest one known in all of New England but it has declined by more than 50% in the past 30 years. Blanding's turtle nests are often inadvertently destroyed and adults, especially nesting females, have been killed by cars when crossing roads. Without our help, these unique turtles, many of whom are over 60 years old, will soon be gone from Concord.

### What We're Doing:

In 2003, biologists and conservationists, led by Dr. Bryan Windmiller, Ecological Consultant, John Berkholtz of Zoo New England and Stephanie Koch of USFWS Great Meadows, began studying the plight of the Great Meadows Blanding's turtles. Since then, we have been tracking Blanding's turtles at Great Meadows, learning about their needs, protecting nests, and raising some of the young at Zoo New England and the New England Aquarium to enhance their chances of living to be the adults of the future.

### What You Can Do to Help:

- **Report any sightings** (note exact location and time) of Blanding's turtles at Great Meadows to:

**Bryan Windmiller: [bwindmiller@gmail.com](mailto:bwindmiller@gmail.com) Ph 978-369-5507**

If the turtles have radio-transmitters attached, please **record the number on the transmitter** if there is one visible. Please also **note if there are notches filed into the edge of the shell** and, if you have a camera, take photos of any notches.

- **Allow these rare turtles to nest in your yard.** Many of our females choose yards as their nesting sites during the June nesting season. Please, if possible, allow these rare turtles to nest on your property and allow our turtle conservationists access to locate the nest and protect it with screening. We would then check on the nest each day in September to secure the babies of the next generation.

- Help turtles cross the road.** Please, if safe for you, help all turtles across roads, always placing them on the side to which they were heading.

## Blanding's Turtle



Large (7-9" adults), high-domed dark shell.  
**Bright yellow, unstriped throat and chin.** No red markings.

QuickTime™ and i  
TF (Incompressible) decompressors  
are needed to see this picture.

Radio-transmitter glued to hind-quarters of Blanding's turtle shell with red-brown epoxy. Antenna often trails to rear. Please record and report any numbers on radio, as in photo above, these are typically 150.XXX.

## No Need to Report



**Snapping Turtle:** Very large. Saw-toothed rear edge of flat shell. "Dragon-like" points on tail.



**Painted Turtle:** Most frequently seen turtle at GM, often basking. Fairly small (4-6" adults). Flat, dark shell. Yellow and red stripes on head and neck. Red markings on edge of shell.