



*Midland Painted Turtles basking at the edge of a creek. Photo: Dorthea Hangaard*

The Midland Painted Turtle is characterized by colourful yellow and red markings on its head, neck and legs as well as the red margin on its shell. Though still likely to be the most common turtle you will see in the field, the population is in decline. This is due to a number of factors, but habitat loss and road mortality during nesting season are the leading culprits. Midland Painted Turtles are slow to reach maturity and lay fewer eggs per clutch than other species of turtles, making it difficult for the population to replenish itself following the deaths of adult turtles.

Here are some things to keep in mind during your monitoring trips going forward:

- Note all turtle nests you find in the field. Even if they've been dug up and predated already their location can help us figure out what areas to focus on in the future.
- Take photographs if you can! Not only will this help us back up reports to the Natural Heritage Information Centre, but it will give us more data when it comes to assessing population health on our properties.
- If you can't take photographs, try to note the relative size of the turtles you are seeing. This can help us determine whether or not the population is reproducing successfully.