

OXBOW AT HOME

Native Box Turtles

Wildlife Wednesday Reflection Questions

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Name 5 adaptations that you learned about.

Domed shell good for living on land, claws on feet for digging insects in dirt, coloration for hiding or camouflaging, hard shell for protection from predators, will eat anything it finds or is an opportunistic feeder, does not have teeth, has a beak for a mouth, shell is covered in scutes, they are cold-blooded or ectothermic, they go into brumation in cooler months, Eastern box turtle males usually have red eyes, and so on.

What does terrestrial mean? Can you describe the habitat of a box turtle?

Terrestrial refers to living on land. Box turtles live in woodlands, grasslands, meadows, and nears streams or ponds.

Why could a turtle never leave its shell?

A turtle is a vertebrate, which means it has a backbone or spine. Its vertebrate is connected to the inside of its shell. As a turtle grows (and the rest of its bones grow), the turtle's shell grows with it. A turtle cannot survive without its shell.

Draw the diet of a box turtle, labeling each food. What type of eater are they?

Answers will vary. Box turtles are opportunistic omnivores, eating plants, meat, even dead matter, mushrooms, and snails that come across while foraging.

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Describe some similarities and differences you learned or noticed about the three different box turtle species.

Answers will vary. Students may have noticed that all box turtles are a similar size and shape. They all have dull coloration, but the coloration with different species differs - Eastern box turtles have more vibrant assortment of coloration from orange to red and yellow while 3-Toed Box Turtles are a solid grayish brown and Ornate Box turtles have an intricate "ornate" or decorative pattern on their shell. Eastern box turtle males have red eyes and females have brown eyes. The 3-Toed Box Turtles have three toes on their back feet.

If you had to become an opportunistic feeder, what are a few food items that you don't like that you may have to start to eat if you ate anything you encountered in your family's refrigerator?

Answers will differ. Students should list foods they do not like to eat that you may have at home

Turtles shells are covered in a keratin layer called a scute. What else is made of keratin in your everyday life?

Hair and nails

Bonus: Can you remember how many box turtles there are in total in Oxbow Meadow's animal collection?

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