



Helpful Hints to Help Turtles



Turtle Crossing the road admissions:

Aquatic turtles can travel many miles during a single year and will often travel far from water to lay their eggs. Extra vigilance is needed late May through June when females move to familiar egg laying sites. During their travels (to and from laying their eggs) they come across many obstacles but the most dangerous is crossing roads. Sadly, we see many turtles admitted after being hit by cars.



How to help turtles:

Luckily, everyone can make the turtles' journey less dangerous by doing a few simple things. When you are driving, watch out for any turtles who are crossing the road or who may have been hit.

If you see a turtle crossing a road and it is safe for you to pull over and help, you can move the turtle to the other side of the road in the direction it was heading. Do not try to redirect the turtle. They return to their same ponds and marshes to breed and eat. Females return to the same-habitat to lay eggs. If you point them the other way, they will eventually turn around to cross that same hazardous road.

To pick up a turtle, use two hands on either side of the shell, away from their face. Do not pick a turtle up by its tail, it can damage their spine.



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Even if you are not sure the turtle is alive any longer, please consider bringing the turtle to WINC for assessment. If deceased we can harvest any intact eggs which may be incubated in our turtle hatchling program. All hatchling turtles are released back into the habitat that the mother had occupied!

Do not relocate the turtle to a place you think is more suitable. Simply move them to the other side of the road they are crossing and let them go on their way. While moving them to water may seem like the kind thing to do, in reality, it could just make their journey longer and more dangerous as they reroute back to their original home.



Watch out for Snapping Turtles, they have long necks. You may not see how long it is until you are trying to move it! To help move them use an object to scoop them into a large container or onto a car mat and drag them across the road. To check out a video that demonstrates some safe options for moving a snapping turtle off the road, click the following link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-gd_B6iKPxU.

Be sure to wash your hands after handling a turtle.

Report your sighting to the Wisconsin Turtle Conservation Program here, a citizen-based monitoring program aimed at identifying high-mortality locations along roads in order to better conserve Wisconsin's eleven turtle species.

To find the nearest wildlife rehabilitator see the Wisconsin DNR list at <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/directory.html>.