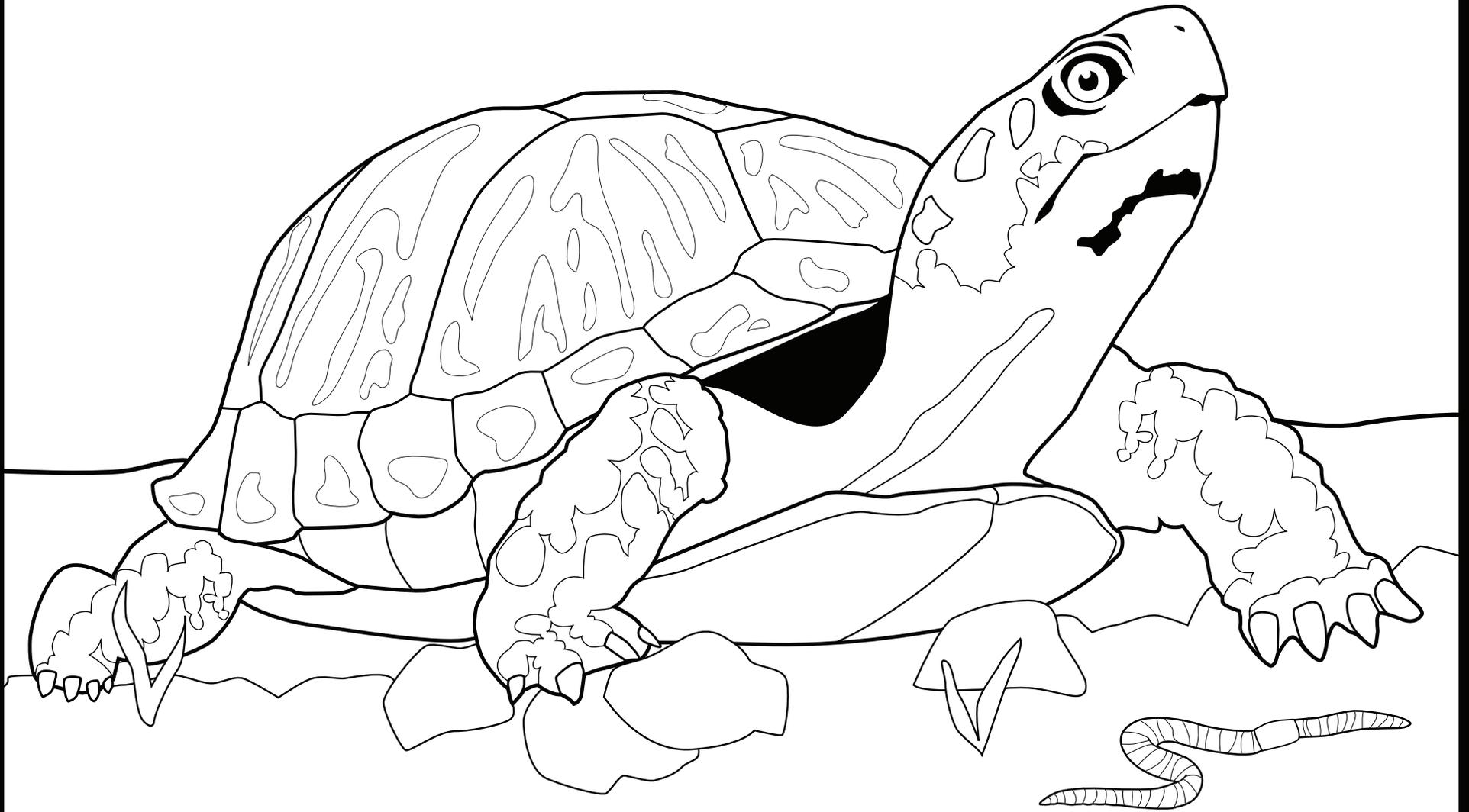


Eastern Box Turtle



Did You Know that Eastern Box Turtles...

- **Live as long as humans?** Some live to be 100 or more years of age in the wild.
- **Are the only "land turtle" in the northeastern United States?** They may use the shallow edges of wetlands to soak and drink, but most of their time is spent on land.
- **Are protected by law?** Many turtle populations are declining and state regulations limit the number of eastern box turtles that can be removed from the wild in the northeast.
- **Can close completely in their shell?** Other turtle species can only partially retreat into their shell. This provides great protection from predators for a slow moving land animal.
- **Do a rain dance?** Box turtles stomp their front feet on the ground to simulate rain. This tricks worms into coming to the surface. Turtles eat a variety of foods such as worms, insects, berries, and mushrooms.
- **Lay eggs and deposit them in open canopy areas (such as some fields, lawns and small openings in the forest)?** They dig out a nest chamber in exposed sandy soil to lay their eggs, usually 4-6. After covering them back up, the turtle leaves and the eggs and hatchlings (which hatch in about 3 months) are left to fend for themselves.

You can help by...

- **Leaving turtles where you find them.** Don't take them home or move them to what you think is a "better" location. Turtles form a mental map of the area where they grow up, allowing them to know where to find food and shelter throughout the season. Humans often do more harm than good when taking care of a wild animal.
- **Helping turtles across the road,** if you find a turtle crossing a road and you want to help, always consider your own safety first. Once you decide that it is safe for you to move a turtle, move it across the road in the direction it was already heading. They are on their way to a particular resource (such as a berry bush that's in bloom) and will be very stubborn about going in that direction.
- **Not releasing pet turtles** into the wild. Even healthy pet turtles may carry bacteria or diseases that could make wild turtles sick.
- **Protecting natural areas** for box turtles.

