



Western Painted Turtles, May 28, 2021

Thank you for joining this online information session
Please mute your audio. We will get started soon!

Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program

We conserve and enhance fish and wildlife in watersheds impacted by BC Hydro dams.

BC Hydro fulfills water licence and voluntary commitments through the FWCP. The FWCP is funded annually by BC Hydro.

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Fisheries and Oceans
Canada



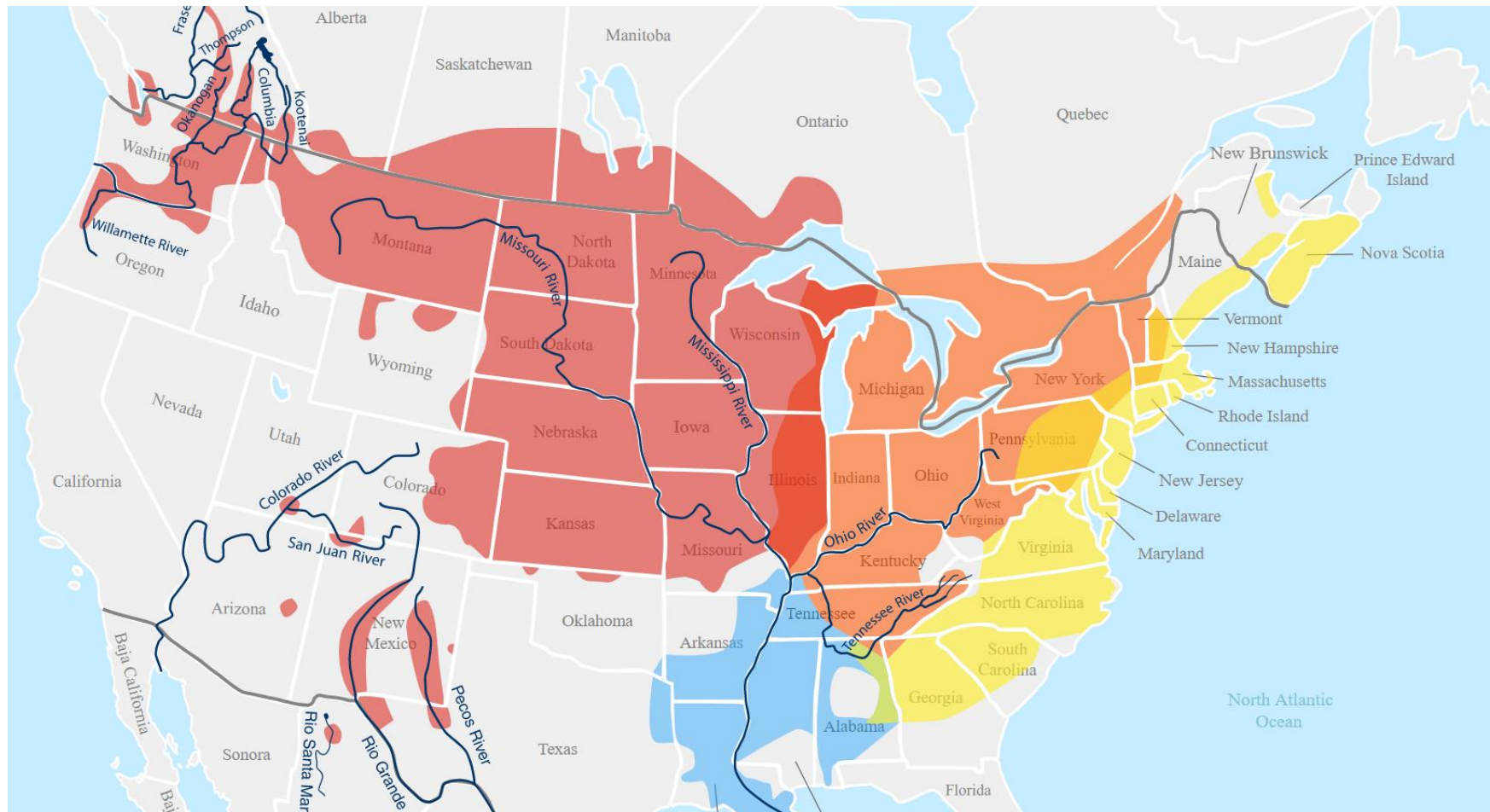
Question time...

- Do hatchlings always head directly for the water when they come out of the nest?



Painted turtles in North America

- Around for 15 million years
- Four subspecies: eastern, midland, southern, and western
- Western: widest distribution, and largest in size



Western painted turtles in B.C.

- Pacific Coast population (Red-listed)
- Intermountain – Rocky Mountain population (Blue-listed)
- Only native freshwater turtle in B.C.
- Live in permanent freshwater habitats - ponds, lakes, marshes, and sloughs
- Threatened by alteration or destruction of wetland habitat
- Up to 90% of all turtle nests are lost to predators
- Of those that emerge, only 20% make it to adulthood

Quick facts

- Live for up to 30 years in wild
- Are omnivorous. Hatchlings/younger turtles more carnivorous
- Gender is determined by nest temperature: colder=males
- Can withstand much colder temps than most cold-blooded animals



Quick facts (cont.)

- Every plastron is unique
- Shell is made of bone, and is fused to the spine and ribs
- Shell has layer of scutes that it sheds as it grows – age can be determined by counting rings
- No external ears: their shell serves as an ear drum to conduct low frequencies to the inner ear



How do they survive Canadian winters?

- Hatchlings remain in the ground until the following spring
- Hibernate under the ice, in the shallows closer to shore
- They have perfected butt “breathing”!
- Unequalled in their ability to tolerate the build-up of lactic acid



Photo: Bonnie Shlakoff

Video: Monitoring and stewardship at Elizabeth Lake



Elizabeth Lake - results

- 2020 summer: 104 nests laid
- 2021 spring:
 - 1,420 eggs
 - average number of eggs/nest=14
(range from 8 to 23)
 - 1,019 hatchlings successfully “fledged”
 - equates to a survival rate of 72%
 - predation rate of 6%



Check under the mullein!

- Hatchling question – NO, they don't all head directly to water!



Video # 2: Conservation of turtles at Baynes Lake



Other FWCP-funded turtle projects - Revelstoke

- Loafing logs / habitat assessment: Okanagan Nation Alliance



Other FWCP-funded turtle projects: South Slocan

- Turtle signage and awareness - Inland to Island Enterprises



Photo: Bonnie Shlakoff

Other FWCP-funded turtle projects: Argenta

- Turtle nesting habitat monitoring and stewardship, Province of B.C.



Other FWCP-funded turtle projects: Creston

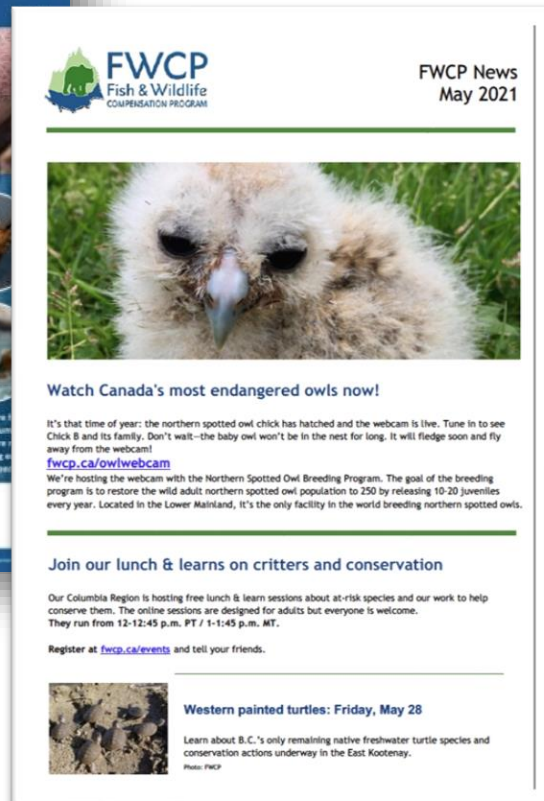
- Studying turtles and their habitat needs: VAST Resource Solutions



Questions



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Thank you!



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White Sturgeon, Friday, June 4, 12 p.m. Pacific

Snakes, amphibians, and other critters, Friday, June 11, 12.p.m. Pacific

Register at fwcp.ca/events/

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