

Biology and Conservation of Emydine Turtles: General Acknowledgments

We've been fortunate to learn from many individuals who have generously shared their time, energy, and knowledge and helped this special issue take form. With 43 contributions from Canada, Mexico, and the United States, this special issue underscores the widespread and persistent interest in the emydine turtle clade. We've been inspired by the persistence and creativity of hundreds of people working to improve the conservation outlook for these remarkable turtles. It is exciting to see their work compiled together in this issue.

We are indebted to the team at Eagle Hill Institute, especially Keith Goldfarb and Don Padgett, for their efforts to make this special issue a reality. Their patience and knowledge were essential. We extend thanks to the Editorial Board of *Northeastern Naturalist* for their support and to the journal's administrative staff: Devyn Adams, Chase Uy, and Bailey Tausen.

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The rationale for this special issue arose during a series of 3 conservation symposia focused primarily on Wood, Blanding's, and Spotted Turtles held in Massachusetts (2016), West Virginia (2019), and Pennsylvania (2022). Those meetings featured many presentations of original and unpublished research. It was clear that there was enough current, relevant, novel, unpublished Emydinae content to fill several journal issues. Jessica Meck was instrumental in organizing all three symposia, and the most recent (2022) committee included Tom Akre, Andrew Badje, Scott Buchanan, Kathy Gipe, Mike Jones, J.D. Kleopfer, Roy Nagle, Kevin Oxenrider, Patrick Roberts, Julie Slacum, and Liz Willey.

We acknowledge the biologists whose recent work led to the recognition of the Emydinae as a stable monophyletic group or clade, including those who have dedicated their efforts to resolving species-level taxonomic decisions and intra-specific structure. As a result of their work, conservation efforts can be more precisely tailored to meet the needs of distinct population segments and evolutionarily significant units. Their efforts provide the framework for this special issue, as well as applied conservation and management decisions.

In closing, we'd like to recognize and acknowledge 2 critical funding sources that have enabled, to some extent, a substantial number of papers included here. The Competitive State Wildlife Grants program—administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service—has supported many emydine-focused projects in the context of multi-state partnerships between 2011 and 2024. The Regional Conservation Needs Program (RCN; also supported by State Wildlife Grants) of the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (NEAFWA), also supported many emydine-focused regional projects during the same time period.

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