Ringed Map Turtle  
*Graptemys oculifera*

Federal Status: Threatened (December 23, 1986)  
State Status: Threatened (December 20, 1989)

**Rarity Rank:** S2/G2

**Identification:**  
- Background carapace color dark olive brown with a broad yellow to reddish ring on the costal scutes.  
- Head conspicuously marked with a large yellow spot behind each eye, 2 yellow stripes radiating backward from the eyes, and a mostly yellow lower jaw.  
- Prominent dorsal spines in juveniles and males, less so in adult females.  
- Relatively small turtle; carapace length in adult males 8-10 cm, adult females 12-22 cm (4.7-8.6 in).

**Habitat:**  
- Generally inhabits clean rivers having a moderate current, an open canopy, and numerous nesting beaches and basking logs.  
- Ideal nesting beaches are islands composed of clean, fine-grain sand, with a minimum of vegetative cover and a minimum elevation of 1—3 m (3.3-9.8 ft) above river level.

**Food Habits:** Feeds primarily on insects although small fish, mollusks and carrion are also consumed.

**Reproduction:** Males mature at approximately 3-5 years of age, females at 10-16 years of age. Females nest during the day generally producing 1-2 clutches of 3-4 eggs annually.

**Threats:**  
- Natural and man-made changes in river hydrology, which decreases availability of exposed sandbars  
- Lower water quality also decreases the food supply  
- Collecting for the pet trade  
- Illegal point-bar mining  
- Loss of basking and foraging sites through snag removal

**Beneficial Management Practices:**  
- Follow Best Management Practices for Streamside Management Zones  
- Protect stream from clearing and snagging to maintain basking logs  
- Protect exposed sandbars
U. S. Range: LA, MS
- Endemic to the Pearl and Bogue Chitto River drainages in Louisiana and Mississippi
- In Louisiana, this species is relatively uncommon south of Bogalusa in the Pearl River and has been seen as far upstream as Franklinton in the Bogue Chitto River.

Conservation Efforts:
- Surveys of potential habitat for the species
- Protection of occupied habitat from dredging and other activities that alter water quality and exposed sandbars

References:
