



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Registering Prohibited & Restricted Native Turtles by July 19, 2025

Is there a cost for the permit to register prohibited and restricted native turtles? What is the deadline for registering these turtles?

No. The permit is FREE. The deadline to register any prohibited turtles in possession or restricted turtles exceeding the recreational limit is July 19, 2025.

Where can I find the new regulations on prohibited and restricted turtles?

[Click to view a PDF of the new reptile and amphibian regulations.](#)

Do the regulations apply to turtle species that are not native to Louisiana?

No. The permits only apply to turtles that are native to Louisiana.

Can I collect and sell native turtles?

No. Commercial use of native turtles is prohibited.

Can I collect native turtles for food or as a pet?

Recreational collection for food or pets is allowed with a limit of 2 turtles per species per person not to exceed an aggregate of 10 turtles in possession at any time. Exceptions to the recreational limit includes 1 alligator snapping turtle per person per day and 1 in possession at any time and no more than 2 native box turtles, regardless of species, in possession at any time.

What is the rule for prohibited turtles? Which turtle species are prohibited?

Prohibited turtles shall not be collected from the wild under any circumstance.

The following species are prohibited: Stripe-necked Musk Turtle, Eastern Chicken Turtle, Western Chicken Turtle, Mississippi Diamond-backed Terrapin, Ringed Map Turtle (federally threatened), Pearl River Map Turtle (federally threatened), Gopher Tortoise (federally threatened), Green Sea Turtle (federally threatened), Loggerhead Sea Turtle (federally threatened), Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle (federally endangered), Hawksbill Sea Turtle (federally endangered), and Leatherback Sea Turtle (federally endangered).

What is the rule for restricted turtles? Which turtle species are restricted?

Restricted turtles may be collected for recreational purposes only and collection must abide by the regulatory limits of 2 turtles per species per person not to exceed an aggregate of 10 turtles in possession at any time with the exception of 1 alligator snapping turtle per person per day and 1 in possession at any time, and no more than 2 native box turtles, regardless of species, in possession at any time.

The following species are restricted: North American Snapping Turtle, Alligator Snapping Turtle, Mississippi Mud Turtle, Razor-backed Musk Turtle, Eastern Musk Turtle, Southern Painted Turtle, Ouachita Map Turtle, Mississippi Map Turtle, Sabine Map Turtle, Eastern River Cooter, Red-eared Slider, Smooth Softshell, Spiny Softshell, and box turtles.



For more information about registering prohibited and restricted native turtles

WWW.WLF.LOUISIANA.GOV/PAGE/MISC-LICENSES-AND-PERMITS#TURTLE



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How do I obtain more information?

Reach out to LDWF at LDWFHerps@wlf.la.gov or 337-735-8676 for more information.

How do I obtain a permit to register prohibited or restricted native turtles I have in my possession?

[Click to download and fill out the application for registering prohibited or restricted native turtles.](#)

Completed applications should be submitted to LDWFHerps@wlf.la.gov.

Do the permits expire? How long can I keep my turtles?

Yes. Permits expire on December 31 of each year and must be renewed within 30 days of the expiration date. Permit renewals can be acquired by contacting LDWFHerps@wlf.la.gov. Permittees can keep their turtles until the registered turtles expire. Anyone with a temporary exemption to possess prohibited turtles may not acquire more prohibited turtles. Anyone with a temporary exemption to possess restricted turtles that exceed the recreational limit may not acquire more turtles until the number of restricted turtles in possession is below the recreational limit.

Are there any exemptions to these rules?

Exemptions to this rule may be approved by LDWF for scientific, exhibition, or educational use by accredited and certified zoos, aquariums, universities, and research and nature centers via a LDWF issued permit. LDWF permitted wildlife rehabilitators may also receive an exemption, but will require a permit from LDWF. Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators, as permitted by LDWF, are exempt from take and possession limits. NWCOP permittees shall not relocate or release Red-eared Sliders off site.

What should I do if I no longer wish to keep my turtles?

It is a violation of Louisiana law to release captive wildlife into the wild in Louisiana without approval from LDWF. Please contact LDWF for assistance at LDWFHerps@wlf.la.gov or 337-735-8676 if you would like to surrender your turtles to LDWF.

I am a private landowner and have an issue with nuisance turtles on my property? What can I do?

Private landowners may harvest Red-eared Sliders considered a nuisance on their property as long as those turtles are humanely euthanized in accordance with AVMA guidelines. These turtles shall not be transported or released off site.

Can I engage in captive breeding of native turtles?

No. With the exception of turtle farmers licensed through LDAF prior to January 20, 2025, captive breeding activities are prohibited unless approved and permitted by LDWF. Offspring from unauthorized captive breeding activities shall be surrendered to LDWF.

If I have turtles living in a pond or lake on my property, do I need to register those turtles?

If you have created a waterbody on your property and have released turtles in that waterbody, or if you have intentionally stocked an existing waterbody on your property with turtles, or if you have turtles living in a waterbody on your property and you have/are actively feeding those turtles then you will need to register those turtles with LDWF.



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