

Key to the turtles of Pennsylvania

1. Carapace covered with leathery skin, flexible at edges. Three claws on front limb
.....Trionychidae...5
- 1'. Carapace covered with hard epidermal scutes. Front limb with five claws.....2
2. Plastron with 12 scutes. Pectoral scutes contributing to bridge.....Emydidae..6
- 2'. Plastron with 11 or fewer scutes. Pectoral scutes not contributing to bridge.....3
- 3 Tail long with dorsal crest of large tubercles. Carapace serrated posteriorly.....
.....Chelydra serpentina
- 3'. Tail short with fleshy papillae. Rear of carapace smooth.....Kinosternidae...4
- 4 Plastron with two well developed transverse hinges. Pectoral shield triangular. No
uncornified skin along median plastral suture.....Kinosternon subrubrum
- 4'. Plastron with one weakly developed plastral hinge. Pectoral shields quadrangular.
Areas of uncornified skin adjacent to median plastral suture...Sternotherus odoratus
5. Carapace with series of tubercles along anterior margin. Nasal septum with ridge that
projects into nostril. Carapace may have pattern of white or black spots.....
.....Apalone spiniferus
- 5'. Carapace smooth anteriorly. Nasal septum without ridges.....Apalone mutica
6. Plastron with transverse hinge between pectoral and abdominal scutes. Carapace highly
domed (except in hatchlings).....7
- 6'. Plastron without transverse hinge. Carapace domed or not.....8
7. Carapace an elongate oval in outline, black with speckled pattern. Tip of beak notched
anteriorly. Throat bright yellow in life.....Emys blandingi
- 7' Carapace shorter, broader posteriorly than anteriorly, with variable pattern. Tip of beak
normal. Throat not bright yellowTerrapene carolina
8. Axillary and inguinal scutes small to absent.....9
- 8'. Axillary and inguinal scutes large.....11
9. Carapace without median keel in adults. Each dorsal scute with one or more yellow or
orange spots.....Clemmys guttata
- 9'. Carapace usually with a median keel. Unspotted.....10
10. Large turtles. Carapace rugose and depressed, usually with strong median keel. Skin
often with orange or yellow highlightsGlyptemys insculpta
- 10'. Small turtles. Carapace smooth and somewhat domed, may have a weak median keel.
Orange marking on posterolateral portion of head, may extend onto neck.....
.....Glyptemys muhlenbergi

11. Carapace keeled middorsally, and with a pattern of thin, yellow lines tracing irregularly curving patterns on scutes. Marginal scutes notched posteriorly. Distinctive yellow spot behind eye.....Graptemys geographica
- 11'. Not as above..... 12
12. First marginal extends well beyond the suture between first costal and first vertebral scutes. Upper jaw notched anteriorly with distinct cusp on either side of notch. Carapace brown to black, and may have vertical red stripes anteriorly. Arrow shaped mark on snout.....Pseudemys rubriventris
- 12'. First marginal ends near suture between first costal and first vertebral scutes. Upper jaw without anterior notch. Carapace olive green to brown, edged with reticular red and black design. No arrow shaped mark on snoutChrysemys picta. 13
13. Plastron unmarked or nearly so. Costal and vertebral scutes line up with each other.....Chrysemys picta picta
- 13' Plastron with dark, oblong marking near center. Costal and vertebral scutes alternate in position.....Chrysemys picta marginata