

RAMSEY READER



THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITIES:

Differentiate turtles vs. tortoises

Play with shadow puppets

Go on the lookout for turtles

Turtles

Minnesota is home to nine turtle species: the Blanding's turtle, false map turtle, northern map turtle, Ouachita map turtle, painted turtle, smooth softshell turtle, snapping turtle, spiny softshell turtle and the wood turtle.

Turtles vs. tortoises

Turtles and tortoises are often mistaken for each other, but there are many things differences between the two that will help you tell the difference.

	Turtles	Tortoises
Habitat	In or near water	Drier habitats
Shell	Flat, light and smooth, good for swimming	Heavy and domed
Diet	Omnivores - plants, fish, insects	Mostly herbivores - plants
Limbs	Webbed toes for swimming	Short and sturdy

Another way to tell the difference: we don't have any tortoises here in Minnesota! In the United States, all five tortoise species prefer warmer climates. However, we do have nine different turtle species: Blanding's turtle, false map turtle, northern map turtle, Ouachita map turtle, painted turtle, smooth softshell turtle, snapping turtle, spiny softshell turtle and the wood turtle.

Aquatic turtles depend on clean water. You can do your part to help turtles by keeping waterways free of trash, plastic bags, fertilizer and pesticides.



SEARCH FOR TURTLES

Local turtles can often be found sunning themselves on a log, rock or along shorelines. To try and view turtles, head out on a sunny day and visit one of these parks:

Keller Regional Park – Turtles love the logs in the marshy area along the Highway 61 side of the boardwalk. While you're there, enjoy Keller Lake and watch for eagles!

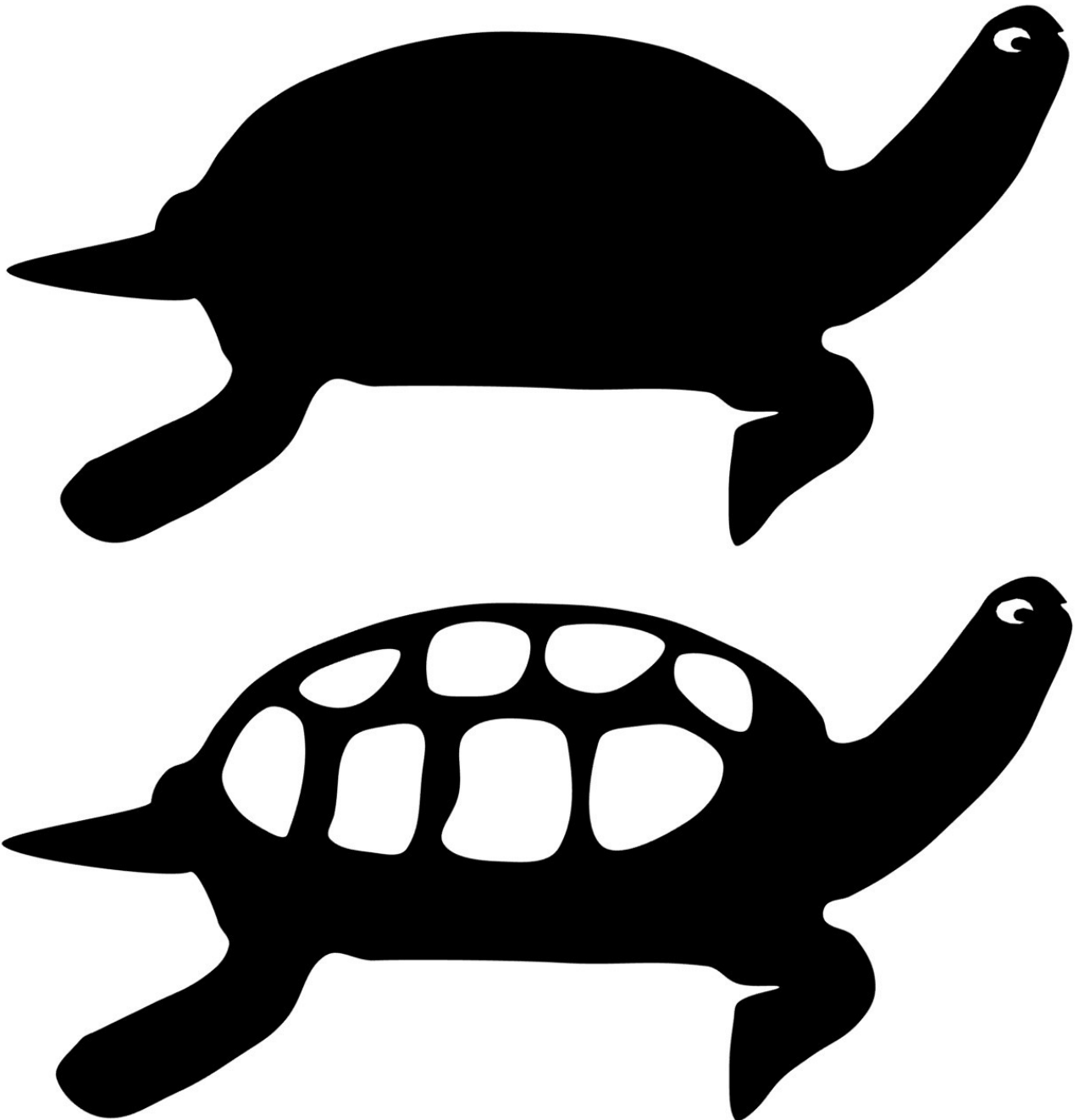
Sucker Creek Channel – Vadnais Snail Lake Regional Park – Sucker Channel goes under Highway 96 and is a favorite sunning spot for turtles.

Turtle shadow puppets



CREATE A SHADOW PUPPET

1. Print turtles onto cardstock or trace them onto cardboard, like a cereal box.
2. Cut out your turtles! You might want to use a hole punch for the eyes; those can be tricky.
3. Glue or tape on a stick to hold your turtle.
4. Tell a story with your turtles! You can hold them out flat in front of you to cast a shadow on the sidewalk, or hold them in front of a lamp to make a turtle on the wall. What turtle stories can you tell? If you have chalk for your sidewalk, draw a stage for your show or a habitat for your turtle!



Turtle scramble

Unscramble each of the clue words. Each is a type of turtle found in Minnesota.

Afterwards, take the letters that appear in the green boxes and unscramble them for the final message.

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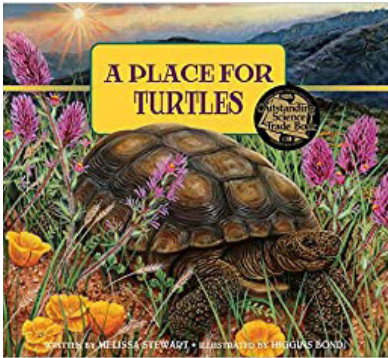


Ramsey readers

Here are some interesting books to get your little learners interested in turtles. All of these books are available through Ramsey County Library. Book descriptions from: www.rclreads.org



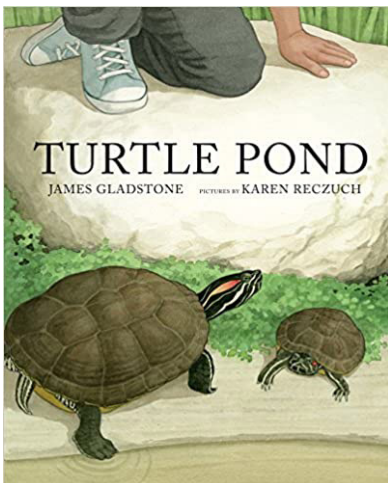
DIVE INTO A GOOD BOOK



A Place for Turtles

by Melissa Stewart

This fact-filled, colorful book looks at the amazing world of turtles. In simple yet informative language, *A Place for Turtles* provides an intriguing look at turtles and the ecosystems that support their survival. Readers are introduced to the ways human action or inaction can affect turtle populations, and offers a list of things they can do to help protect turtles in their own communities.



Turtle Pond

by James Gladstone

A child and his parents visit their local public garden throughout the year, observing the turtles as they play, dive, feed, bask, climb, hide and doze. Stunningly beautiful illustrations accurately portray these extraordinary creatures, both in and out of the water, surrounded by lush plants and the changing seasons beyond the greenhouse windows.



Turtles

by Laura F. Marsh

Take a dip with turtles in this exciting reader. Packed with beautiful and engaging photos, kids will learn all about these fantastic reptiles. This level 1 reader is carefully leveled for an early independent reading or read aloud experience, perfect to encourage the scientists and explorers of tomorrow!

Learn more

There's so much more to learn about turtles. Check out these select resources to continue exploring and discovering.

[Minnesota Department of Natural Resources](#)

Find more details about Minnesota's nine native turtles.

dnr.state.mn.us/reptiles_amphibians/turtles

[Amphibian & Reptile Survey of Minnesota](#)

Be a citizen scientist! Submit photos of turtles you come across to be part of this ecological survey.

mnherps.com

[Minnesota Zoo](#)

Learn about the Minnesota Zoo's conservation efforts of freshwater turtles.

mnzoo.org/conservation/minnesota/freshwater-turtles

Turtle scramble answers

False map, painted, snapping, softshell, wood, Blanding's

Did you know?

The Blanding's turtle spends the winter in the mud of streams, ponds and marshes. They don't lay their first clutch of eggs until they are about 12 years old and only lay one clutch a year. For more information check out the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

tiny.cc/blandingsturtle