

**WESTERN POND TURTLE
(CLEMMYS MARMORATA)**



Description

The western pond turtle is the only native turtle in California. Its size ranges from 3.5 to 7.5 inches (88 to 188 mm; length of shell). Its shell can be olive, dark brown, or blackish, with or without pattern. (Usually, there is a pattern of spots, lines, or dashes of brown or black.)

Habitat

This turtle is highly aquatic and is found in ponds, marshes, rivers, streams, and irrigation ditches where it

may be seen basking on logs, rocks, or banks. It can also be found in terrestrial habitats such as grasslands, woodlands, and open forests as females travel over land to lay eggs. They are active from February through November in the north, and all year in the south. They eat vegetation, insects, worms, fish, and carrion.

There are two subspecies of pond turtle in California: the southwestern pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata pallida* and the northwestern pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata marmorata*). The northwestern pond turtle ranges generally from the American River northward. The southwestern pond turtle ranges from about Monterey Bay south through the coast ranges and into Baja California. The two subspecies are thought to occur together in the area of the Central Valley from the Tehachapi Mountains north to the American River and west to the eastern edge of the inner coast ranges.

Range/distribution

Western pond turtles are found in Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, and Yolo counties.

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