

**Don't Take Him Home
Let Box Turtles Stay Wild!**



Box Turtles Are In Trouble

Box Turtles are North Carolina's state reptile. Their numbers are dwindling, in part because many people pick them up to take home as pets. It may be just one here and one there, but the result is thousands of box turtles disappearing from our forests and fields, forever.

They Need To Stay Wild

As far as nature is concerned, a turtle taken from the wild is "dead." It can no longer help maintain the population. "Saving" a turtle by bringing it home in fact hurts fragile turtle populations. Taken from the wild, box turtles often sicken and die. When captive turtles are released into unfamiliar surroundings, they are often killed by predators or crushed by cars as they attempt to return to their original wild home.



Cover Photo: Male Eastern Box Turtle by J.D. Willson

Turtles On The Road

If you see a turtle crossing the road, move it to the side that it is headed. Resist the urge to drive it to a "safer" place. Remember, that individual may have been living in the area for decades, already knows where to find food and mates, and has a special place to hibernate or lay eggs. Be careful so that you don't get hit by a car either. Don't take risks with your own life!

Help Wild Box Turtles

You and your children can help wild box turtles. Report your box turtle observations, plus other reptiles and amphibians, to the Carolina Herp Atlas:

www.carolinaherpatlas.org



Photo by Gil Grant

Female Eastern Box Turtle