

Wetland Watchers - Turtle Behaviour Descriptions

These descriptions are very basic, and are not the only behaviours that turtles will exhibit. However, these are the ones that will be easy to observe and identify from a distance with binoculars.

Swimming

The turtle is moving through the water. You might only see its head and neck sticking out of the water, although the top of its shell might also be visible above water.

Basking

The turtle is resting stationary in the sun, often on a log or rock.

Mating

There may or may not be splashing with two turtles struggling near the surface of the water. The male mounts the female with his plastron (belly shell) pressed against her top shell, his claws tightly gripping the edges of her carapace, and his tail wrapped around hers. This can happen below the surface and might be hard to detect.

Nesting

You might see a turtle nesting along the shores of a wetland or on the road shoulder adjacent to a wetland. The turtle will look like it's lying on the ground and it may be slowly rocking from side to side or back and forth, and there may be a pile of disturbed soil behind it.