



# WESTERN PAINTED TURTLES

Western painted turtles are found in freshwater habitats across western North America, including Revelstoke. These turtles are known for their vibrant, unique markings and are the largest subspecies of painted turtles. They have been designated **Special Concern** due to extensive loss of habitat and increase of human activity.

## DISTINCT MARKINGS



Their upper shells (carapace) are dark brown while their limbs have bright, striking yellow stripes. This helps them camouflage among rocks and vegetation.

Their bottom shells (plastron) are bright reddish-orange with a distinctive dark, butterfly-like shape down the midline.

## HABITAT

Western painted turtles can be found in Williamson Lake, Airport marsh and the Montana/Cartier bays. They spend most of their time in freshwater. They are omnivorous with adults tending to be herbivores and juveniles tending to be carnivores. They can stay submerged for long periods.

They need to bask in the sun to regulate their body temperature. They often perch on logs or rocks to absorb heat, which helps them mate, digest food and stay active.



## NESTS



During nesting season, female turtles can be seen crossing Airport Way to find loose soil.

They dig shallow nests, about 10 cm deep, in sandy areas near water. They lay clutches up to 23 eggs that hatch in the late summer or fall. The hatchlings stay in nests over the winter and emerge the following spring, crossing Airport Way to get to the water.

## THREATS

- Speed and volume of road traffic
- Proliferation of roads
- Rapid and Increased habitat loss
- Human interference i.e. picking up turtles
- Climate change
- Increased predation of eggs and juveniles



# HOW TO HELP

- Slow down near sensitive areas (Airport Way)
- Respect the SLOW down signs
- Be observant when driving, especially during late-afternoons and early evenings in May-July
- Stop and let turtles cross, do not pick them up unless in immediate danger
- Educate people around you
- Volunteer with Turtle Conservation Revelstoke

If seen please contact: [wildsight@revelstoke.ca](mailto:wildsight@revelstoke.ca) and/or record on iNaturalist app

QR Code for our website:



Visit our website for more information on Western Painted Turtles and our other projects:  
<https://wildsight.ca/branches/revelstoke/>