ABOUT BOG TURTLES

Bog turtles are unique to the eastern United States and are our smallest turtles! These tiny turtles grow only 3 to 4.5 inches long and can be identified by their dark brown shells and the yellow-orange spots on the sides of their necks. They live in mountain bogs which are a very threatened type of wetland - less than 10% of mountain bogs remain today. Landowners like you can play a crucial role in bog turtle and wetland conservation by taking steps outlined here. You can help restore wetland habitat and make it more bog turtle-friendly, protecting this special species from going extinct.



OTHER WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- Contact a biologist at your state wildlife management agency if you think you have seen a bog turtle or own a wetland that you think may have bog turtles
- If you believe you may have seen poachers on your property, report it to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's law enforcement tip line at 1-844-FWS-TIPS (1-844-397-8477) or online at www.fws.gov/wildlife-crime-tips
- Consider enrolling your land in a national or state conservation program (tax perks and financial assistance may be available!)

To learn more about bog turtles and other ways you can help conserve them, visit:

SO YOU WANT TO HELP PROTECT BOG TURTLES?



Here are 4 steps you can take to make your wetlands more bog turtle-friendly

ARC Amphibian and Reptile Conservancy

Defenders of Wildlife

1) HELP HABITAT BY PLANTING NATIVE

Bog turtles hunt for food, bask, hide from predators, and lay eggs in grassy and mossy clumps. Plants like sedges, rushes, and sphagnum moss provide great habitat for bog turtles to do so. Using a shovel or hand trowel, transplant a few clumps of these plants to bare patches within the bog. Pollinator plants like milkweed are great too!



Sedges



Sphagnum



Rushes

2) PREVENT TREE & SHRUB OVERGROWTH

Bog turtles need mucky soil to burrow and sunlight to bask and incubate eggs. Remove ~75% of trees in the bog and any others blocking sunlight along the perimeter. To do so, safely cut the tree down and dab the stump with wetland-safe herbicide or, make a circular cut around the outside of the trunk and squirt with herbicide. This will allow more water and sunlight to enter the bog.

3) REMOVE INVASIVE PLANTS

Get rid of non-native, invasive plants by cutting the stems and dabbing with wetland safe herbicide. Dispose of any clippings in a brush pile outside the bog.



"Unhealthy Bog"



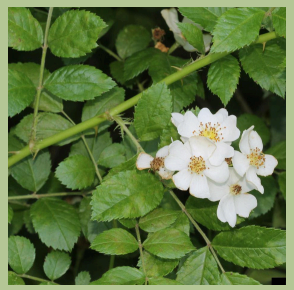
"Healthy Bog"

How to fix a headcut

4) STOP WETLAND EROSION BY REPAIRING SMALL STREAMS

Small wetland streams can form a headcut- which is when the water suddenly drops off and erodes upstream. This can drain water from the bog, which reduces habitat that turtles need to survive. Scan the QR code above to learn how to easily mend a stream bank affected by a small headcut (no permits required!)

Species to get rid of:



Multiflora Rose



Bradford Pear



Chinese Privet



Japanese Honeysuckle



Oriental Bittersweet