

## Northern Diamondback Terrapin Fact Sheet

### Name

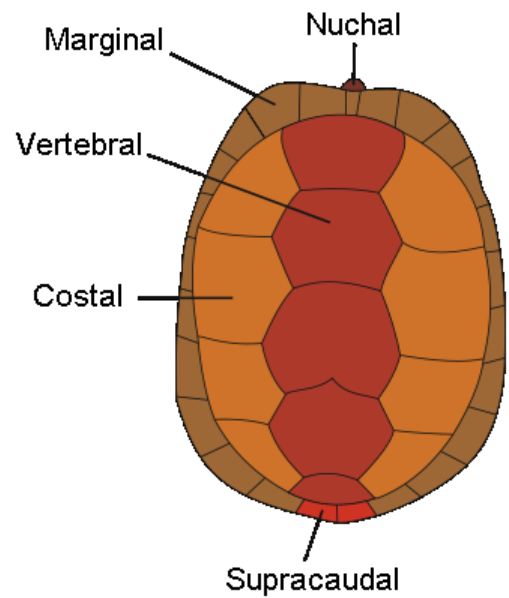
- Northern Diamondback Terrapin
  - *Malaclemys terrapin terrapin*
- ‘Terrapin’ was the Lenni Lenape word for ‘little turtle’
  - Terrapins, compared to other sea turtles, were quite small

### Physical

- Reptiles
- Cold Blooded
- Lay eggs
  - 4-20 clutch size in New Jersey
- Feet are both webbed & clawed
  - Only turtle specie to be like that
- Differences between sexes
  - Females
    - larger (to hold the eggs!)
    - Thinner, Shorter Tail
  - Males
    - Smaller
    - Thicker, Longer tail
- Terrapins (like all turtles) can not leave their shells!
  - Their spine is infused into the carapace of the shell
- Scute- an external scale or slate on the outside of a turtle shell
- Carapace- top part of the Terrapin shell
  - 24 Marginal Scutes outlining the Carapace
  - 5 Vertebral Scutes located on the spine of the Carapace (Vertebrate!)
  - 8 Costal Scutes, 4 on each side of the Vertebral, on the Carapace
- Plastron- bottom part of the Terrapin shell
- Bridge- part that connects the carapace to the plastron
- Streamlined- shell is flatter than a land turtle’s, so that it can move through the water quickly

### Environment

- Found in Brackish water- salt and fresh water mixture
  - Ex. Barnegat Bay Estuary
- Only species of turtle found in Barnegat Bay
- Nest during the day and night
- Lives in the bay for most of life, only coming on land to nest
- Nesting season ranges from May to early August



## Threats

- Human interaction
  - Crab pots
  - Automobile & Boating accidents
- Natural Predators on eggs
  - Terrapins are especially vulnerable during their juvenile stage, and only one in one hundred eggs make it to adulthood
  - Mammals
    - Ex: red fox, mink and raccoons
  - Birds
    - Ex: egret, gulls and crows
- Natural
  - In the egg
    - Drowning, desiccation, root penetration
  - Rest of life
    - Hurricanes and other strong currents washing them out to sea