

# WOOD TURTLE

*GLYPTEMYS INSCULPTA*

**A humble helper**

## Main benefits for agriculture

The wood turtle helps control pest populations in **areas adjacent to agricultural land** by feeding on insects and other invertebrates. Its impact is moderate, but even the smallest contribution to pest reduction makes a difference.

**Versatile:** The wood turtle feeds on insect pests found in vegetable crops (leaf beetles, aphids, maggots), grain crops (beetle larvae and cutworms), orchards (aphids, fruit flies, tree pest caterpillars), and forage crops (Diptera larvae).

The wood turtle plays a role in **seed dispersal** by evacuating feces. In this way, its presence promotes plant diversity and ecosystem services such as pollination, pest regulation, and soil stabilization, which are essential for maintaining long-term agricultural productivity.



## Habitats

- Fallow fields, grasslands, and pastureland
- Clear and meandering medium-sized streams with a sandy and/or gravelly riverbed and slow to moderate current
- Wetlands
- Open forests and woodlands

## Did you know?

Wood turtles often inhabit **wetlands and streams**. Protecting these habitats helps ensure water quality, which is vital for irrigation and crop health.

# What you can do to help the wood turtle

## Preserving habitat

Maintain or create a **biodiverse riparian buffer wide enough** to provide turtles with a favourable habitat and keep them from venturing into fields.

## Encouraging reproduction

Leave **sandy and gravel banks at the edge of waterways** in their natural state, as they are potential egg-laying sites for wood turtles.

Delay the first haying **until after July 15** (uncut reserves).

## Reducing mortality

**Increase mowing height** to at least 15 cm and reduce mower speed to less than 10 km/h to give turtles more time to get out of the way and avoid crushing them.

Cut hayfields occupied by the species **parallel to the waterway**.

Limit interventions and work involving machinery as much as possible in floodplains.

**Reduce pesticide and fertilizer use** by using integrated pest management methods and promoting soil health.

**Locate nests and mark them** with a small flag or wooden stake to avoid damaging or destroying nests and eggs (e.g., during use of farm machinery).

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