

# Three-toed Box Turtle

## *Terrapene Carolina triunguis*



### ANIMAL CHARACTERISTICS

**Appearance:** The three-toed box turtle is a small, land-dwelling turtle with a high-domed shell and typically three toes on each hind limb. They reach just over six and a half inches in carapace length, roughly the size of an average hot dog.

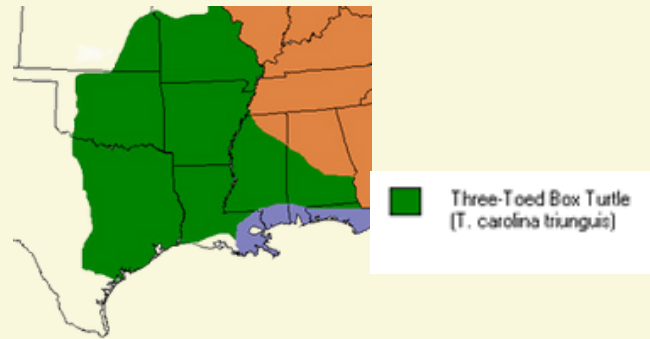
**Habitat:** These turtles require proximity to water and prefer habitats that combine wooded and grassy areas.

**Diet:** They primarily feed on insects they hunt in still, shallow water, but they also consume plant matter and various other small animals.



### BREEDING

After breeding, females select nesting sites, use their back legs to dig a shallow hole, and deposit 3 to 8 eggs before covering them. After approximately three months, the baby turtles begin to hatch. It may take a few days for them to fully emerge from their shells, and at this point, they are only about 1 inch long, roughly the size of a paper clip. From the moment they hatch, these tiny turtles are independent and fend for themselves.



### RANGE

The three-toed box turtle is native to the south-central United States, ranging from Missouri and Oklahoma to the south in Alabama and westward into Texas.

### WHERE DO I LIVE IN THE ELM FORK NATURE PRESERVE?

I prefer a solitary life and usually stay within my own territory. Look for me near the pond in the back of the preserve. You're most likely to spot me just after rain, especially during spring and early summer, when I'm breeding.