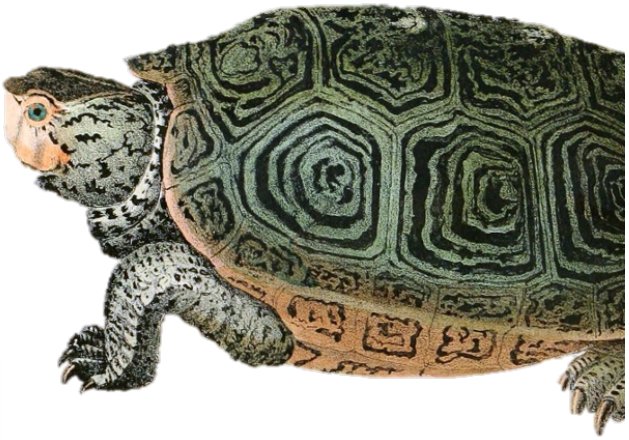
New Jersey Diamondback Terrapin



What is a Terrapin?

- A terrapin is a small turtle that lives in the United States. They are typically found on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. The Diamondback Terrapins are the only type of turtle found exclusively in brackish waters.

Why Do Terrapins Need Help?

- Population loss is a big problem for the terrapins. In the early 1900s, they were often hunted for their meat.
- Habitat loss is also affecting the terrapins. Coastal communities on sand dunes and barrier islands have destroyed most of the homes for the terrapins.
- Road crossing is very dangerous for these animals. During the nesting season, many adult female terrapins will try to cross the road in order to find a good nesting space.
- Crab traps also harm the terrapins. Each year, thousands of terrapins get stuck in large commercial crab traps. Since these turtles have lungs and require oxygen, they often drown.

What Can You Do to Help?

- Participate in programs sponsored by the Wetland's Institute. These programs such as the Adopt a Terrapin Program support terrapins by funding conservation projects, road patrol activities, and releasing rescued baby terrapins.
- Look out for turtles crossing the road. If you see a terrapin on the road and if it is safe to do so, stop and wait for the turtle to cross the road.
- Call the Wetlands Institute if you find any injured Terrapins. If you find an injured terrapin, place it in a box lined with a paper towel. Then call the Wetlands Institute at (609)-368-1211.
  For further information, contact Matt Von der Hayden at (609)-525-9360.

Printed on recycled paper