














WILDLIFE SPECIES IDENTIFICATION GUIDE



REPTILES

Common Name	Image(s)	Description	Call
Common snapping turtle		big head and jaws, keel on tail and often on scutes (these are the shapes that make up the carapace, or upper shell).	N/A
Painted turtle		large spaces (lines) between scutes (these are the shapes that make up the carapace, or upper shell). Red "paint" swirls around the edges; dark spots in center of plastron (belly shell)	N/A
Box turtle		carapace (upper shell) is a high dome, plastron (belly shell) has moveable hinge (when scared they go all the way inside); carapace pattern can vary but often an intricate yellow and black pattern.	N/A

Common Name	Image(s)	Description	Call
Spotted turtle		our only spotted turtle; spots can vary greatly in number; plastron (belly shell) has dark blotches.	N/A
Wood turtle		carapace (upper shell) has many distinct ridges; the “sculptured” turtle; skin is orange-red, though this can fade with age; black blotches on plastron (belly shell)	N/A
Musk turtle		smaller turtle; egg-shaped; pointy head with 2 light stripes; barbels on chin and throat; tiny plastron (belly shell)	N/A
Eastern milk snake		Red-black-yellow pattern distinct in RI	N/A

Reptiles, continued

Common Name	Image(s)	Description	Call
Common water snake		<p>Seen in or by water; very dark brown blotches down the back, and a similar alternating pattern down the sides; light belly with dark spots and half-moons.</p> <p>note: this one gets confused for the venomous Cottonmouth or “water moccasin” which aren’t found north of VA; there are NO venomous</p>	N/A
Dekay’s brown snake		<p>small snake; brown with wide, light back stripe bordered by 2 parallel rows of dark spots</p>	N/A
Common ribbon snake		<p>skinnier than a garter snake; stripes are brighter and more well-defined; dark stripe along belly margin</p>	N/A
Eastern garter snake		<p>pattern in stripes can vary; larger than a ribbon snake; stripes are less defined; lighter stripe along belly margin</p>	N/A

Common Name	Image(s)	Description	Call
Eastern Smooth Green Snake		obvious	N/A
Northern Black Racer		obvious	N/A