

IDENTIFICATION CARDS
Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles
of India



TRAFFIC, India Office
TURTLE SURVIVAL ALLIANCE (TSA)-India
WWF-India
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INTRODUCTION:

'Testudines' or 'Chelonii' (turtles, terrapins and tortoises) is one group of reptiles that are covered with bony plates enclosing their soft body parts; the dorsal plate is known as the 'carapace' and ventral plate is known as the 'plastron'. The structural pattern of these plates is the key character for their identification. These two plates have undergone modification during evolution of this group about 200 million years ago and the structural pattern of these plates is the prime key character for identification of this group.

Turtles are further divided into 'marine turtles' and 'freshwater turtles' depending upon the habitat they live in. Twenty eight species of tortoises and freshwater turtles are found in India distributed across the country.

Leith's Softshell Turtle *Nilssonina leithii*, Cochin Forest Cane Turtle *Vijayachelys silvatica* and Travancore Tortoise *Indotestudo travancorica* are endemic to India.

Key characters to differentiate between tortoises, turtles and terrapins:

Character	Tortoise	Turtle	Terrapin
Habitat	Spends all its life on land.	Spends all its time in water and only comes to land to lay eggs.	Spends time both on land and in water along rivers, ponds and lakes.
Carapace	Dome shaped to protect it from predators.	Laterally compressed and streamlined for swimming.	Laterally compressed and streamlined.
Limbs	Feet are short with bend legs, digits non-webbed.	Forefeet modified as flippers hind feet webbed.	Webbed feet to assist in swimming.
Head	Completely retracts its head into the shell.	Cannot retract its head into the shell.	Can fold its head sideways.

ILLEGAL TRADE IN TORTOISES AND FRESHWATER TURTLES OF INDIA:



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The tortoises and turtles of India, especially the freshwater turtles face enormous threat from illegal wildlife trade. They are collected from the wild and traded in large numbers for both consumption within India and for smuggling to other countries as pets. They are poached for their meat that is consumed as a delicacy and their body parts are used in oriental medicines.

Like many other wildlife species, there is limited data available regarding their population status and trade, to estimate scientifically the effect of trade on species survival and conservation in the wild. While most of the illegal trade goes unreported, the large numbers that are reported in seizures indicate heavy levels of exploitation that may be unsustainable.

In India, most tortoise and turtle species are protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and their international trade is further regulated under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) to which India has been a signatory since 1976. Despite the legal framework to protect the species from exploitation, poaching and trade continues unabated. Recent seizures of tortoises and turtles in India have indicated worrisome trends. For example, there has been a huge demand for the Black Spotted Turtle and the Indian Star Tortoise in international markets.

Local consumption for meat within India has been a major domestic threat to tortoises and turtles giving rise to an immediate need to create more awareness among communities and civil society regarding conservation and protection of tortoises and turtles in India.

FRESHWATER SOFTSHELL TURTLE

ASIATIC SOFTSHELL TURTLE *Amyda cartilaginea*



© Linthoi Naorem

CONSERVATION STATUS:
Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I
CITES: Appendix II
IUCN Redlist: Vulnerable

DISTRIBUTION:
Mizoram (Ngengpui Wildlife Sanctuary) and Tripura.

IDENTIFICATION FEATURES:
Long snout; a distinct row of tubercles along the front of the carapace; plastron with five callousities.

THREAT: Meat consumption in India; smuggled to other countries for its meat and use in traditional Chinese medicines.



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Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India

FRESHWATER SOFTSHELL TURTLE

INDIAN NARROW-HEADED SOFTSHELL TURTLE *Chitra indica*



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CONSERVATION STATUS:
Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I
CITES: Appendix II
IUCN Redlist: Endangered

DISTRIBUTION:
Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and West Bengal occurring in Ganges, Godavari, Mahanadi and Sutlej Rivers.

IDENTIFICATION FEATURES:
Head extremely narrow with eyes situated close to the nostrils; a 'V' shaped mark commences from the nape and extends to the carapace.

THREAT: Meat consumption in India; calipee smuggled out for traditional Chinese medicine



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Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India

FRESHWATER SOFTSHELL TURTLE

INDIAN SOFTSHELL TURTLE/GANGES SOFTSHELL TURTLE *Nilssonina gangetica*



© Shailendra Singh

CONSERVATION STATUS:
Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I
CITES: Appendix I
IUCN Redlist: Vulnerable

DISTRIBUTION:
Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

IDENTIFICATION FEATURES:
Carapace low, oval and grey black; head is green above with several black oblique stripes on the forehead and sides.

THREAT: Meat and egg consumption and harvesting for outer cartilaginous rim (calipee) used for medicinal purposes.



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Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India

FRESHWATER SOFTSHELL TURTLE

INDIAN PEACOCK SOFTSHELL TURTLE *Nilssonina hurum*



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CONSERVATION STATUS:
Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I
CITES: Appendix I
IUCN Redlist: Vulnerable

DISTRIBUTION:
Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

IDENTIFICATION FEATURES:
Carapace olive with a yellow rim of ocelli; head with black reticulation and large orange or yellow patches.

THREAT: Meat consumption; harvested for outer cartilaginous rim; (calipee) used for medicinal purposes.



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Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India

TRAFFIC: TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, is a leading non-governmental organisation working globally on trade in wild animals and plants in the context of both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. TRAFFIC works in strategic alliance with WWF and IUCN. TRAFFIC's mission is to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals is not a threat to the conservation of nature. In India, TRAFFIC operates as a programme division of WWF-India. To know more, please visit www.trafficindia.org; www.traffic.org.

Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA): TSA was formed in 2001 as an IUCN partnership for sustainable captive management of freshwater turtles and tortoises, as a response to the rampant and unsustainable harvest of Asian turtle populations to supply to Chinese markets, a situation known as the Asian Turtle Crisis. TSA works with zoos, aquariums, universities, private turtle breeders, veterinarians, government agencies, and conservation organizations around the world. To know more, please visit www.turtlesurvival.org.

WWF-India: WWF-India is one of the largest conservation organizations in the country, engaged in wildlife and nature conservation. It has an experience of over four decades in the field and has made its presence felt through a sustained effort not only towards nature and wildlife conservation, but also through sensitizing people by creating awareness through capacity building and enviro-legal activism. The key areas of the work of WWF-India include conservation of key wildlife species and their habitats, management of rivers, wetlands and their eco-systems, promoting sustainable livelihoods, environment education and awareness activities within a variety of social structures, mitigating the impacts of climate change, transforming businesses and markets towards sustainability and combating illegal wildlife trade. To know more, please visit www.wwfindia.org.

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FRESHWATER SOFTSHELL TURTLE

LEITH'S SOFTSHELL TURTLE *Nilssonina leithii*



© Shashwat Sirsi

CONSERVATION STATUS:
Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I
CITES: Appendix I
IUCN Redlist: Vulnerable

DISTRIBUTION:
Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Telangana. It occurs in the Bhavani, Godaveri and Moyar Rivers of peninsular India (Moll and Vijaya, 1986).

IDENTIFICATION FEATURES:
Wart like tubercles present on the anterior edge of carapace; head bears reddish-orange spot.

THREAT: Domestic meat consumption; calipee used in traditional Chinese medicine.



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Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India

FRESHWATER SOFTSHELL TURTLE

BLACK SOFTSHELL TURTLE *Nilssonina nigricans*



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CONSERVATION STATUS:
Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I
CITES: Appendix I
IUCN Redlist: Extinct in the Wild

DISTRIBUTION:
Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya in the (Brahmaputra River in northeast India) and Nagaland.

IDENTIFICATION FEATURES:
Plastron is dark grey with blackish glitter; posterior two thirds of the upper lip is white.

THREAT: Fragmented wild populations; illegal collection of individuals from the wild for meat.



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Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India

FRESHWATER SOFTSHELL TURTLE

INDIAN FLAPSHLL TURTLE *Lissemys punctata*



© Saket Badao

CONSERVATION STATUS:
Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I
CITES: Appendix II
IUCN Redlist: Lower Risk/Least Concern

DISTRIBUTION:
Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and introduced in Andaman Islands.

IDENTIFICATION FEATURES:
Shell can close completely; forelimbs and hindlimb can be retracted fully; olive green carapace with dark yellow blotches.

THREAT: Illegal trade for meat.



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Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India

FRESHWATER SOFTSHELL TURTLE

ASIAN GIANT SOFTSHELL TURTLE *Pelochelys cantorii*



© Nikhil Peraje

CONSERVATION STATUS:
Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I
CITES: Appendix II
IUCN Redlist: Endangered

DISTRIBUTION:
Kerala, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.

IDENTIFICATION FEATURES:
Proboscis extremely short; small flap of skin on the gular region; plastron is cream coloured.

THREAT: Poaching for meat and eggs.



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Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India

FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE

NORTHERN RIVER TERRAPIN *Batagur baska*



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CONSERVATION STATUS:
Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I
CITES: Appendix I
IUCN Redlist: Critically Endangered

DISTRIBUTION:
Sunderbans in West Bengal to historically inhabited estuarine habitats in Odisha.

IDENTIFICATION FEATURES:
Three black stripes on the carapace; a yellow line across the head, above tympanum; plastron plain without any pattern season.

THREAT: Targeted for meat; wild population severely decimated.



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Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India

FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE

THREE-STRIPED ROOFED TURTLE *Batagur dhongoka*



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CONSERVATION STATUS:
Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I
CITES: Appendix II
IUCN Redlist: Endangered

DISTRIBUTION:
Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and West Bengal.

IDENTIFICATION FEATURES:
Three black stripes on the carapace; a yellow line across the head, above tympanum; plastron plain without any pattern season.

THREAT: Fishing (turtles get entangled in the net and drown) and habitat loss; subsistence poaching.



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Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India

FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE

RED-CROWNED ROOFED TURTLE *Batagur kachuga*



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CONSERVATION STATUS:
Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I
CITES: Appendix I
IUCN Redlist: Critically Endangered

DISTRIBUTION:
Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

IDENTIFICATION FEATURES:
Carapace moderately elevated, oval and slightly flaring posteriorly; adult males have red and yellow stripes on blue-black head.

THREAT: Meat consumption; illegal pet trade.



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Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India

FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE

SOUTH ASIAN BOX TURTLE *Cuora amboinensis*



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CONSERVATION STATUS:
Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I
CITES: Appendix II
IUCN Redlist: Vulnerable

DISTRIBUTION:
Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Tripura.

IDENTIFICATION FEATURES:
A hinge across the middle of the plastron to close the shell completely; head dark brown or green above, yellow below, with three yellow or orange-yellow bands.

THREAT: Meat consumption in India; smuggled for use in traditional Chinese medicines and illegal pet trade.

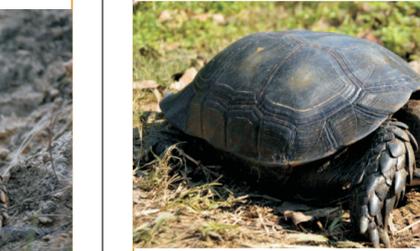


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Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India

<p>FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE</p> <p>KEELED BOX TURTLE <i>Cuora mouhotii</i></p>  <p>© Shailendra Singh</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I CITES: Appendix II IUCN Redlist: Endangered</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Three prominent keels on the carapace; shell elongated; carapace markedly flat-topped; the marginals serrated posteriorly.</p> <p>THREAT: Meat consumption.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>	<p>FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE</p> <p>ASSAM LEAF TURTLE <i>Cyclemys gemeli</i></p>  <p>© Rajeev Basumatry</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule II CITES: Appendix II IUCN Redlist: Not Evaluated</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and West Bengal.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Carapace with dark radiating lines on each scute; colour is brown; a vertebral keel with two lateral keels.</p> <p>THREAT: Meat consumption; illegal pet trade.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>	<p>FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE</p> <p>BLACK SPOTTED POND TURTLE <i>Geoclemys hamiltonii</i></p>  <p>© Arunima Singh</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I CITES: Appendix I IUCN Redlist: Vulnerable</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Head black with yellow (or white) spots; forelimbs black with white spots; carapace elongated and distinctly convex in male.</p> <p>THREAT: Heavily trafficked for pet trade; meat consumption.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>	<p>FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE</p> <p>CROWNED RIVER TURTLE <i>Hardella thurjii</i></p>  <p>© Shailendra Singh</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I CITES: Appendix II IUCN Redlist: Vulnerable</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Four yellowish-orange stripes on both sides of the head and forehead; limb brownish with yellow edges; head large, snout projecting beyond the lower jaw.</p> <p>THREAT: Accidental capture in fishing nets; meat consumption.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>	<p>FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE</p> <p>TRICARINATE HILL TURTLE <i>Melanochelys tricarinata</i></p>  <p>© Saket Badola</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I CITES: Appendix I IUCN Redlist: Vulnerable</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Manipur, Mizoram, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Carapace dark olive, grey-black or reddish brown with three pale yellow keels; digits half webbed; outer surface of forelimbs with enlarged scales.</p> <p>THREAT: Meat consumption; illegal pet trade.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>	<p>FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE</p> <p>INDIAN BLACK TURTLE <i>Melanochelys trijuga</i></p>  <p>© Shailendra Singh</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule II CITES: Appendix II IUCN Redlist: Lower Risk/Near Threatened</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Manipur, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Carapace dark olive, grey-black or reddish brown with pale yellow keels; fingers half webbed; outer surface of forelimbs with enlarged scales.</p> <p>THREAT: Meat consumption; illegal pet trade.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>	<p>FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE</p> <p>INDIAN EYED TURTLE <i>Morenia petersi</i></p>  <p>© Shailendra Singh</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I CITES: Appendix II IUCN Redlist: Vulnerable</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Meghalaya, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Plastron is yellow or orange with black blotches on the axillary scutes; head is olive with three yellow stripes on each side; limbs have yellow margins.</p> <p>THREAT: Meat consumption.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>	<p>FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE</p> <p>BROWN ROOFED TURTLE <i>Pangshura smithii</i></p>  <p>© Arunima Singh</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule II CITES: Appendix II IUCN Redlist: Lower Risk/Near Threatened</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Carapace is brownish-olive with a dark brown vertebral stripe; plastron yellow with or without dark blotches on each scute.</p> <p>THREAT: Meat consumption; males and juveniles collected for illegal pet trade.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>
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<p>FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE</p> <p>ASSAM ROOFED TURTLE <i>Pangshura sylhetensis</i></p>  <p>© Rajeev Basumatry</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I CITES: Appendix II IUCN Redlist: Endangered</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and West Bengal</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Shell is highly elevated, oval and serrated posteriorly with pale brown vertebral keel; a narrow yellow stripe runs from the eyes to the middle of the back of the head.</p> <p>THREAT: Illegal pet trade</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>	<p>FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE</p> <p>INDIAN ROOFED TURTLE <i>Pangshura tecta</i></p>  <p>© Saket Badola</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I CITES: Appendix II IUCN Redlist: Lower Risk/Least Concerned</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Telangana, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Head with orange or reddish crescent shaped post ocular marking; curving up from below the eyes to meet at forehead; neck dark with thin yellow stripes.</p> <p>THREAT: Illegal pet trade; egg consumption; use in traditional Chinese medicines.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>	<p>FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE</p> <p>INDIAN TENT TURTLE <i>Pangshura tentoria</i></p>  <p>© Rishika Dubla</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I CITES: Appendix II IUCN Redlist: Lower Risk/Least Concerned</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Odisha, Rajasthan, Telangana, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Carapace is oval with distinct vertebral keel; carapace is brown in colour with an amber or hazel stripe along the first three vertebrae; the plastron is yellow with large black blotches; head is olive or brownish.</p> <p>THREAT: Meat consumption; captured for pet trade.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>	<p>FRESHWATER HARDSHELL TURTLE</p> <p>COCHIN FOREST CANE TURTLE <i>Vijayachelys silvatica</i></p>  <p>© Peter Praschag</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I CITES: Appendix II IUCN Redlist: Endangered</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: The turtle is endemic to the Western Ghats area of India. It is reported from the States of Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Small turtle with large head; carapace depressed; adult males are typically darker with scarlet iris, yellow to orange mandibles; forelimbs grey with olive-brown scales.</p> <p>THREAT: Meat consumption; feral dogs in Western Ghats.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>	<p>TORTOISE</p> <p>INDIAN STAR TORTOISE <i>Geochelone elegans</i></p>  <p>© Arunima Singh</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I CITES: Appendix II IUCN Redlist: Vulnerable</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Telangana.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Both carapace and plastron are star marked with a pattern of dark brown or black or yellow or beige; shells domed dorsally with flattened sides.</p> <p>THREAT: Illegal pet trade.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>	<p>TORTOISE</p> <p>TRAVANCORE TORTOISE <i>Indotestudo travancorica</i></p>  <p>© Ajay Kartik</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I CITES: Appendix II IUCN Redlist: Vulnerable</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Endemic to Western Ghats.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Shell olive or brownish, usually with black blotches on each scute of the plastron; limbs with yellowish scales and head yellowish brown.</p> <p>THREAT: Meat consumption.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>	<p>TORTOISE</p> <p>YELLOW TORTOISE/ ELONGATED TORTOISE <i>Indotestudo elongata</i></p>  <p>© Saket Badola</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I CITES: Appendix II IUCN Redlist: Endangered</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Odisha, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Carapace brownish yellow; each scute of both carapace and plastron frequently have black blotches; head pale yellow; pink colouration during breeding season around the nostrils and eyes.</p> <p>THREAT: Meat consumption in India and other South Asian countries; smuggled for use in traditional Chinese medicines.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>	<p>TORTOISE</p> <p>ASIAN GIANT TORTOISE <i>Manouria emys</i></p>  <p>© Shailendra Singh</p> <p>CONSERVATION STATUS: Wildlife (Protection) Act of India: Schedule I CITES: Appendix II IUCN Redlist: Endangered</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura.</p> <p>IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Shell is blackish brown; forelimbs have large overlapping scales; a large pointed tubercle is on the thighs; tail terminating in a horny scale.</p> <p>THREAT: Meat consumption ; illegal pet trade.</p> <p>TRAFFIC</p> <p>Identification Cards: Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles of India</p>
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