



Discover Durham's Trails

Weekly Scavenger Hunts

May 29, 2020



This week's Scavenger Hunt features turtles and snakes. With the warm weather and on-set of the month of June, turtles are on the move looking for nest sites, which means they are crossing roads. And snakes often seek out warm pavement for daytime basking. So, keep an eye out as you walk, cycle, or drive on local roads. Below are tips on identifying some of the species you might encounter and what to do if you do.

"Keep an Eye Out for Turtles and Snakes"

Find the previous scavenger hunts [HERE](#).

Helping Turtles and Snakes Across Roads:

- Stay safe – be aware of traffic
- Handle turtle gently and quickly
- Move turtle to side of road in same direction it was heading
- DO NOT move turtle to a different location
- DO NOT pick up a snapping turtle by its tail as can damage its spinal cord. Instead, prod across road with a stick or shovel. Keep hands aware from its mouth as it has a quick, sharp bite
- Drive slowly to avoid basking snakes and turtles crossing roads

TURTLES

PAINTED

Mid-sized turtle with red and yellow striped head and neck; smooth shell with light lines



SNAPPING

Large turtle; rough shell; long tail with distinct saw-toothed edge



BLANDING'S

Heavy, 7-9" turtle with a domed shell; yellow throat; state endangered



SPOTTED

Small, 3-5" turtle with many yellow spots on its shell; state threatened



SNAKES

GARTER

Typically, 2-3 yellow, brown, or green stripes along length of body



NORTHERN WATER

Large; dark body with black, gray, or reddish blotches or bands; variable color patterns



MILK

Reddish splotches on top; white-black checkerboard pattern on belly



BROWN

Small; light to dark brown body with 2 parallel rows of dark spots



All photos by Ellen Snyder

Provided by Durham's Land Stewardship Subcommittee, Conservation Commission, and Parks & Recreation Department