



## Department of Environmental Conservation

**For Immediate Release:** 05/26/17

**Contact:** Lori Severino | (518) 402-8000  
Press Office | [pressoffice@dec.ny.gov](mailto:pressoffice@dec.ny.gov)

### **DEC Advises Motorists to Be Alert for Turtles Crossing the Road**

*New York Motorists Encouraged to Safely Move Turtles to Side of the Road*

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) today reminded the public that the state's native turtles are on the move in May and June seeking sandy areas or loose soil to lay their eggs. Drivers that see a turtle on the road should use caution and should not swerve suddenly or leave their lane of travel, but take care to avoid hitting turtles while driving.

In New York, thousands of turtles are killed each year when they are struck by vehicles as the turtles migrate to their nesting areas. New York's 11 native species of land turtles are in decline, and turtles can take more than 10 years to reach breeding age. The reptiles lay just one small clutch of eggs each year, which means the loss of a breeding female can have a significant effect on the local turtle population.

This time of year, it is especially important to be on the lookout for turtles and to drive cautiously, particularly on roads near rivers and marshy areas. If a turtle is spotted on the road or near the shoulder, drivers should safely stop their vehicle and consider moving the turtle to the side of the road **in the direction the reptile is facing**.

Picking the turtle up by its tail may frighten or injure the reptile. Most turtles can be picked up by the side of their shells.

It's important to use extreme caution when moving snapping turtles; either pick the turtle up at the rear of the shell near the tail using two hands, or slide a car mat under the turtle to drag the turtle across the road. Do not take the turtle into personal possession. All native turtles are protected by law and cannot be collected without a permit.

For more information, visit DEC's website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/277.html>.

###

Connect with DEC on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#)