Trachemys scripta elegans

Red-Eared Slider

Emydidae, the pond turtle family

Diagnostic Characteristics

- Medium-sized freshwater turtle
- Prominent reddish ear marks just behind eyes
- Shell color is olive to brown with yellow stripes or spots; bottom of shell is yellow with dark rounded blotches per scute
- Similar in appearance to native painted turtle; however, the carapace of the slider has a higher dome

Background

- Native to Eastern U.S. and Mexico; Introduced as pet releases through the aquarium trade
- Omnivorous diet
- Highly adaptable to varying habitats
- Can live up to 40 years
- Temperature of egg incubation determines the sex of turtles; warm temps leads to females
- Competes with native turtles for food and space (basking and nest sites)

Photo Credit:

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