

Painted terrapin

Desc:

The Painted Terrapin (*Batagur borneoensis*) is a large freshwater turtle (carapace length up to 50 cm) that inhabits parts of large rivers under tidal influence. Its distribution is limited geographically to Sumatra, southern Thailand, Peninsular Malaysia and Borneo.

Info:

The **Painted Terrapin**, also known as the **Painted Batagur**, is a critically endangered freshwater turtle found in **Malaysia**, primarily along the **east coast of Peninsular Malaysia** in states like **Terengganu and Kelantan**. This species lives in **brackish and freshwater ecosystems**, including river estuaries, mangroves, and lowland wetlands. The terrapin gets its name from the vivid colors the males develop during the breeding season—bright red stripes on their heads and white facial markings. It is primarily **herbivorous**, feeding on aquatic plants, fruits, and sometimes small invertebrates. The species is **nesting-dependent**, laying its eggs on sandy beaches near river mouths, making it vulnerable to **egg poaching and habitat disturbance**. In Malaysia, **conservation programs** led by organizations like the Turtle Conservation Society and the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (PERHILITAN) focus on protecting nesting sites and raising hatchlings in captivity before releasing them into the wild. Despite these efforts, the painted terrapin remains under threat due to **illegal wildlife trade, habitat loss, and pollution**.

Char:

- Adults are large with a relatively attenuated, smooth oval shell.
- Females are drab in appearance, with grey bodies and shells, and a subtle pattern of three broken lines running down the length of their carapace
- . Males are very different, changing colour dramatically during breeding season. They transform from subdued greys and browns to one of the most beautiful turtles in the world.
- When in full breeding colour, males have a striking white neck and head with a brilliant red diamond on the top, between and behind their eyes. Their shells become bolder, with a high contrast of light grey and a bold pattern of dark green to black running in three broken lines down the carapace length

Funfact: