

# Batagur Turtle

Batagur turtles are a group of freshwater turtles found in Asia. Among them, the Batagur baska turtle is found in India.

## General Features

Batagur baska turtles are large freshwater turtles. They can grow up to 60 cm in length and can weigh up to 25 kg. Their carapace (upper shell) is olive green or black, and their plastron (lower shell) is yellow. They have a large head, strong jaws, and webbed feet.

Females of this species typically lay their eggs in sandy riverbanks or on sandbars in rivers during the dry season.

The number of eggs laid by Batagur turtles can vary depending on the size and age of the female, as well as other factors such as food availability and environmental conditions. On average, females of this species lay between 10-25 eggs per clutch, with some larger females laying up to 40 eggs in a single clutch.

It's important to note that not all of the eggs laid will hatch and result in adult turtles. Some eggs may be infertile, while others may be predated or destroyed by environmental factors.

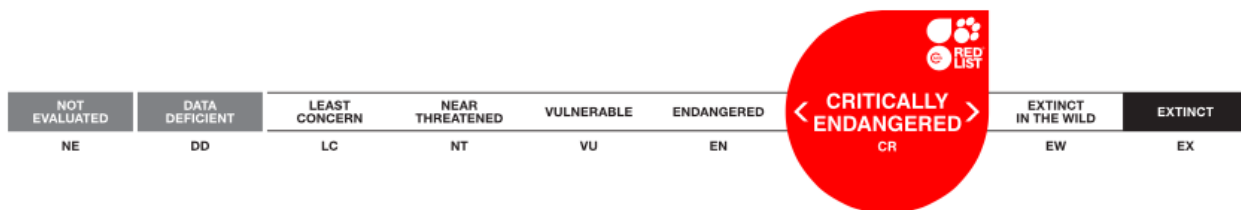
## Habitat and Distribution

The Batagur baska turtle is found in the river systems of the Indian subcontinent. They are found in the Brahmaputra, Ganges, and Mahanadi river systems in India. They prefer slow-moving rivers with sandy or muddy bottoms, where they can bask in the sun.

# Food Habits

Batagur baska turtles are omnivorous and feed on a variety of plants and animals. They feed on leaves, fruits, and flowers of plants that grow near rivers. They also eat insects, snails, crustaceans, and small fish.

# Conservation Status



The Batagur baska turtle is classified as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The primary threats to their survival are habitat loss, hunting, and egg collection. The destruction of nesting sites and riverine habitats due to dam construction, sand mining, and deforestation has led to a decline in their population. Additionally, hunting of adults and collection of eggs for food and traditional medicine have also contributed to their decline.

# Conservation efforts

The Government of India has taken several steps to conserve the Batagur baska turtle. The Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 has banned the hunting and trade of all species of turtles and tortoises. The Forest Department of various states in India is involved in the conservation of these turtles. The Wildlife Institute of India has set up a breeding and conservation program for the Batagur baska turtle in collaboration with the Assam Forest Department. The program aims to increase the population of these turtles by breeding them in captivity and

releasing them back into the wild.

## **Places to spot Batagur baska turtles in India**

The best place to spot Batagur baska turtles in India is the Yamuna river. The sanctuary is home to several species of turtles and is one of the few remaining habitats of the critically endangered Ganges river dolphin.

In conclusion, the Batagur baska turtle is a critically endangered species found in the river systems of India. They are large freshwater turtles that are omnivorous and prefer slow-moving rivers with sandy or muddy bottoms. The primary threats to their survival are habitat loss, hunting, and egg collection. The government of India has taken several steps to conserve them, including the ban on hunting and trade of all species of turtles and tortoises. The National Chambal Sanctuary is the best place to spot Batagur baska turtles in India.