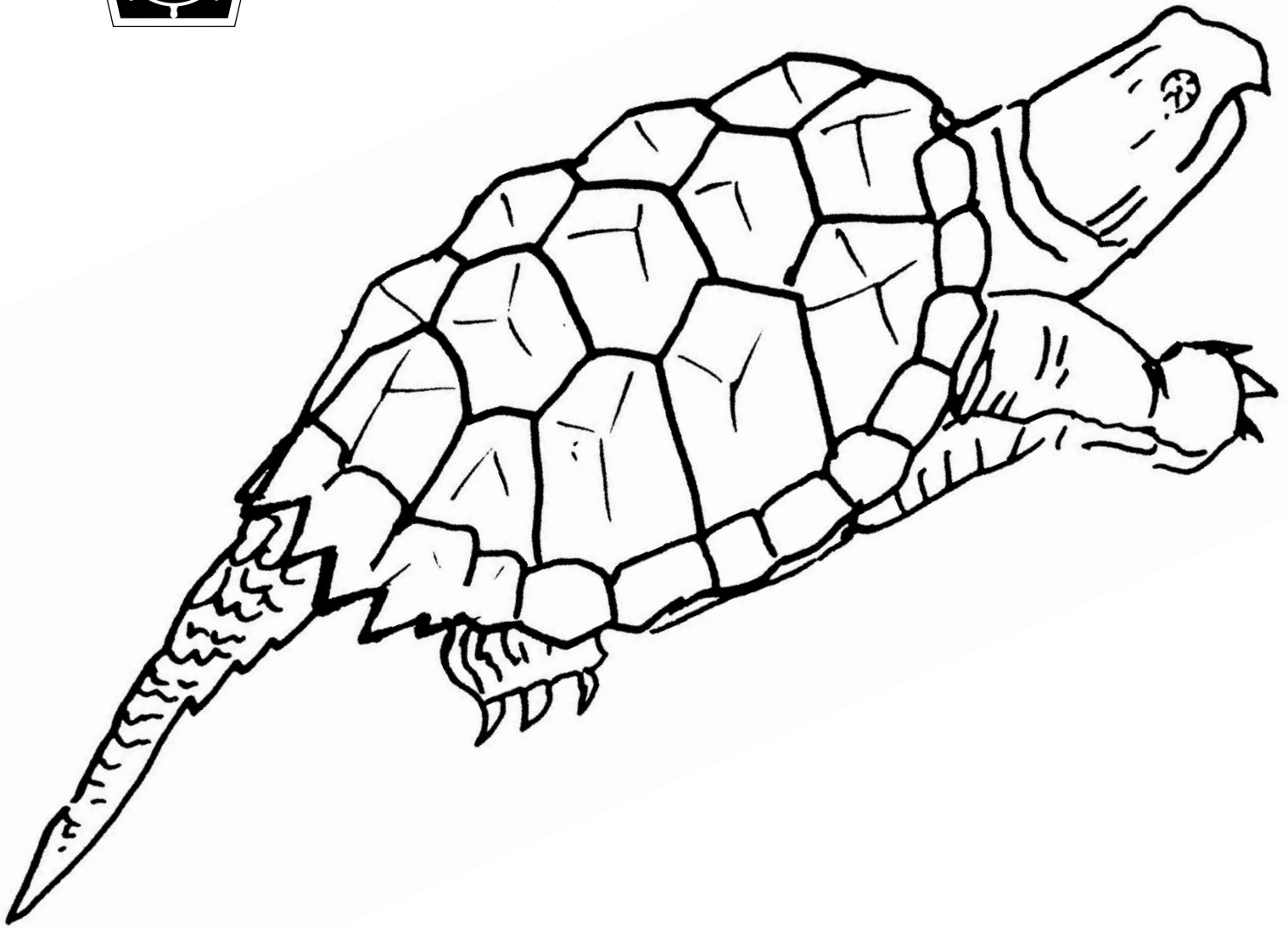




PA's Amphibian and Reptile Coloring Series

Snapping Turtle



All About Me: Snap, snap! I am a Common Snapping Turtle. We are easily recognized by our large heads. Our strong jaws end in a hook. We have a yellow or tan plastron (lower shell) that covers far less of our bellies when compared to other turtles. We have long tails. Our neck is covered with loose, warty skin. Our carapace (upper shell) is tan to dark brown, sometimes nearly black. The carapace is quite rough, and has three rows of keels. If we are approached on land, we hiss as a warning and take up a defensive stance ready for the fight! We are calmer when submerged in water, where we spend most of our time. We are strong swimmers but prefer to walk across the bottom of our watery habitat. We are PA's largest turtle species. Our carapace may measure up to 18 inches long! We can be scavengers and eat carrion, but we also eat a variety of invertebrates, fish, small mammals, and even birds. We also eat aquatic plants to balance out our diets. We are found across PA in all types of water bodies!