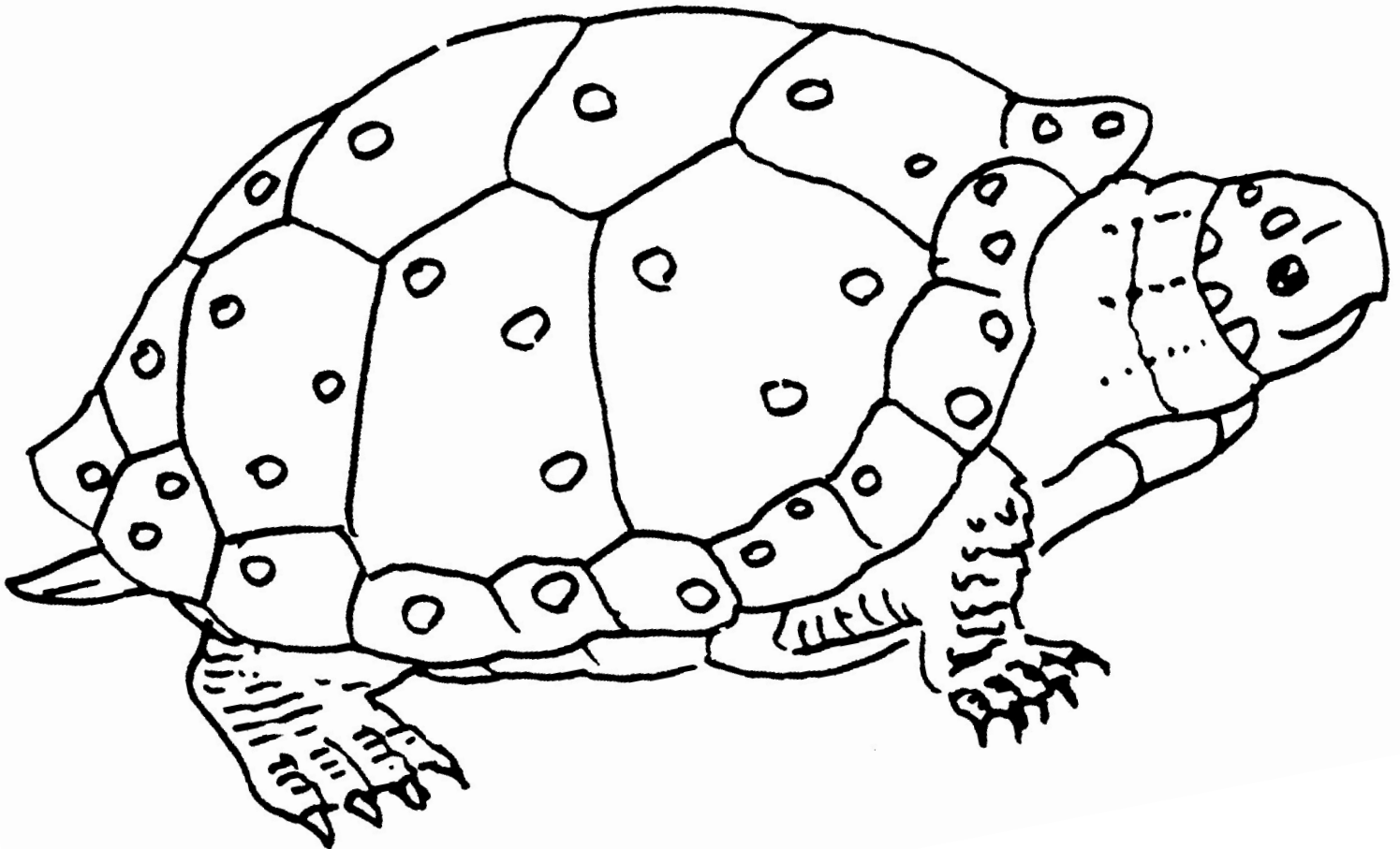




PA's Amphibian and Reptile Coloring Series

Spotted Turtle



All About Me: Hi! I am a Spotted Turtle. We are small with an upper shell (carapace) length of only three to slightly more than four inches. We like to bask in clumps of grass, especially during the cooler spring months, and we are seen more often in springtime. Our carapaces are black with no keels on the scales (called scutes), and the scutes are sprinkled with round yellow spots that vary greatly from one turtle to the next. Our heads, necks and legs are marked with yellow or orange spots. Our black head has an orange spot over the eyes. The lower shell, or plastron, is yellow and bordered with large, black blotches. The female has orange eyes and a yellow chin. The male has brown eyes and a tan chin. The male also has a long, thick tail. In Pennsylvania, we are found east and west of the Allegheny Mountains, our range encompasses around two-thirds of the state. We live in marshy meadows, bogs, and wet woodlands. We like shallow, spring-fed mud-bottomed streams. We spend winters hibernating in mud or debris along a stream bottom, or in an abandoned muskrat hole cut into a stream bank. We occasionally eat plants, but we prefer insects, worms, larvae, mollusks and tadpoles.