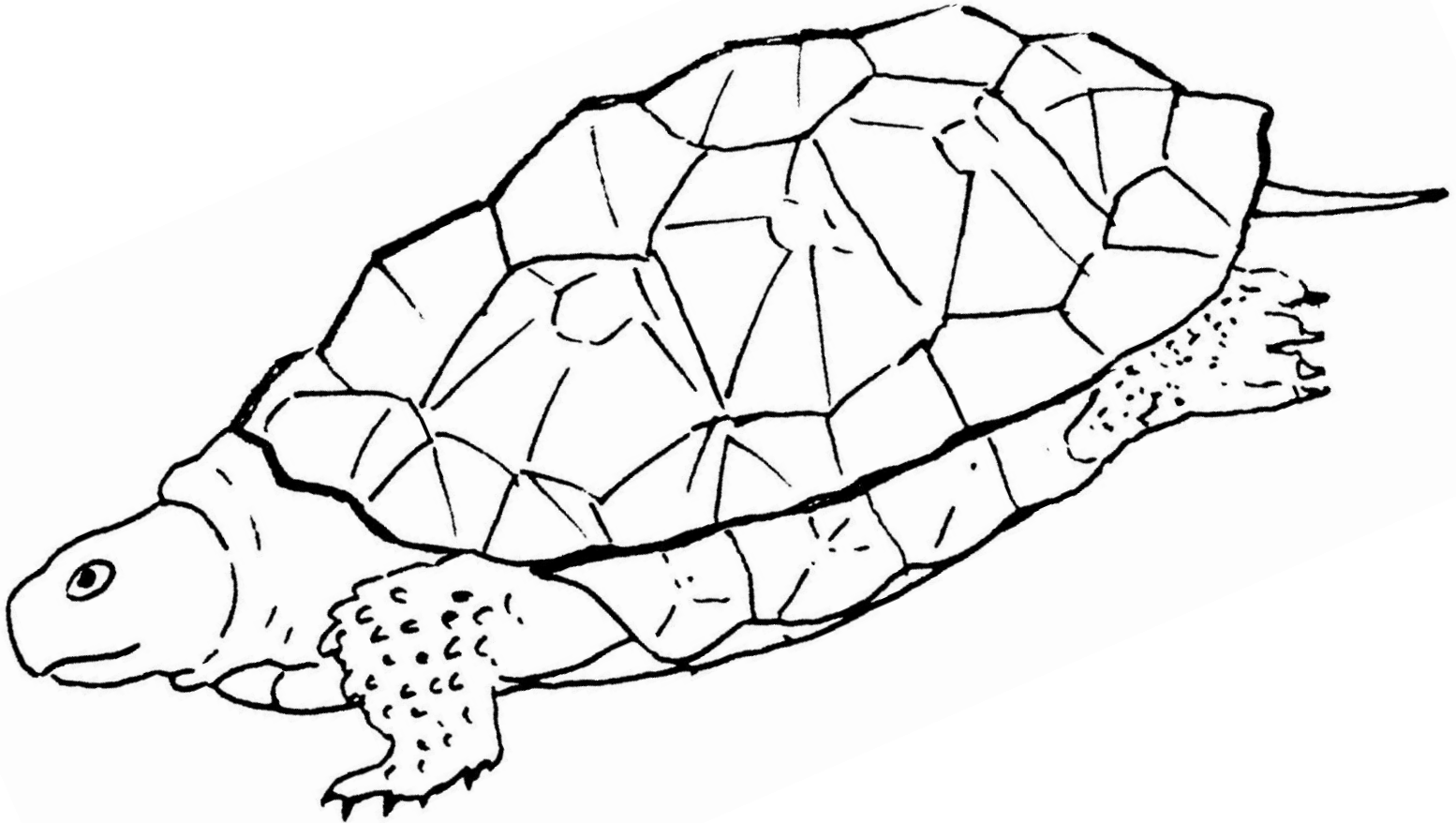




PA's Amphibian and Reptile Coloring Series

Wood Turtle



All About Me: Hello there! I am a Wood Turtle. Only box turtles are more terrestrial than wood turtles are. We grow until our upper shell measures five to almost eight inches long. Our upper shell (carapace) is brown and keeled. Our scutes, large scales, on the carapace look like pyramids, larger on the bottom, becoming smaller as they approach the top. These exaggerated scales appear sculptured and are rough to the touch. Our plastron, or lower shell, is yellow, and each of the scutes are margined on the outer edge with black blotches. Our plastron is hingeless. The skin on our necks and front legs are frequently reddish orange. We are found in most of PA; except for the western border. Although we are terrestrial, we are also at home in water. In fact, we hibernate in water during winter months. We live around streams flowing through hardwood forest. We can also be found in marshy meadows, farmland and swampland with stands of red maple. We are excellent climbers, and even manmade barriers, such as fences, do not stop us from going where we wish. We enjoy eating wild fruit like strawberries and low-bush blueberries, dandelion and sorrel greens. We also eat slugs, insects and tadpoles and worms.