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The **Northern Diamondback Terrapin (*Malaclemys terrapin terrapin*)** is a medium-sized turtle (4-5.5" males, 6-9" females) with a gray, brown, or black carapace (top of shell) and a lighter greenish-yellow plastron (bottom of shell). These turtles are named for the diamond-shaped pattern on their carapaces, and they exclusively inhabit coastal salt marshes, estuaries, tidal creeks, and ditches with brackish water (a mix of salt and fresh water).

### Shorelines and Terrapins

Terrapin nesting habitat has been lost due to shoreline hardening and flooding. However, "**living shorelines**" use natural habitat elements to protect shorelines from flooding, due in part to climate change, sea level rise, and erosion. They also provide important habitat for estuarine wildlife. Shoreline structures built on estuarine habitats, considered "hardened shorelines", can lead to less nesting area for terrapins; whereas, natural shoreline habitats, living shorelines, can provide for terrapin access to nesting areas, and be more effective against flooding. Shorelines are becoming increasingly threatened by sea level rise and erosion, both thought to be more problematic as a result of Global Climate Change.

### What are "Turtle Gardens" and how YOU can help

"**Turtle Gardens**" are patches of sandy nesting habitat above the high water line that are less susceptible to flooding. Turtle Gardens can provide nesting sites to be used by terrapins that may otherwise cross road-ways (risking their lives) to lay eggs or lay eggs in sub-optimal locations. Are you interested in supporting a Turtle Garden? Do you currently have nesting terrapins on your property or are there terrapins nearby and you would like to create a Turtle Garden on your property? If so, please contact [projectterrapin@gmail.com](mailto:projectterrapin@gmail.com) and we can determine if a Turtle Garden is right for you!



Turtle Garden



[www.projectterrapin.org](http://www.projectterrapin.org)



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