

Western Pond Turtle Trapping



SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Nomad Ecology offers western pond turtle trapping services for clients to effectively monitor populations in aquatic habitats. The western pond turtle is in decline, and with the future potential for listing as threatened or endangered, it is critical for land managers to understand how the species is using habitats within their lands. Trapping surveys may detect cryptic populations in areas that are not easily surveyed visually, providing more reliable data on where and how western pond turtles are using aquatic habitats. Nomad staff have extensive experience capturing turtles using industry-standard baited hoop traps and basking traps. With a thorough understanding of western pond turtle ecology and life history, we are able to target our surveys to efficiently gather data for many different project purposes. Juvenile western pond turtles present unique challenges due to their small size and secretive habits, and are often overlooked in conventional surveys. Using specially-modified traps deployed in the appropriate microhabitats, Nomad can prioritize efforts to capture juveniles and produce better assessments of population numbers and age structures. Depending on project goals, Nomad conducts shell-notching for individual identification, radio or GPS tagging for telemetry studies, and measurement of morphometrics usable for growth rate monitoring. In addition, Nomad staff have experience organizing partnerships with zoos for captive rearing and long-term care of captured western pond turtles when necessary to facilitate restoration or construction work within aquatic habitats.



Release of a radio-tagged western pond turtle

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APPLICATIONS

Trapping studies can be designed to meet many different objectives depending on project goals:

- Presence-absence surveys
- Long-term monitoring of known populations
- Habitat use evaluations
- Detection and removal of invasive turtle species
- Radio/GPS tagging and upland movement studies
- Translocations



Captured Western Pond Turtle



Baited hoop trap