



# RED-EARED SLIDER

*Trachemys scripta elegans*  
Emydidae, the pond turtle family

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## FACTSHEET INFORMATION

### Summary of Invasiveness

- The Red-Eared Slider prefers to inhabit rivers, ditches, wetlands, lakes, and ponds.
- Their potential to become invasive is improved by their opportunistic, omnivorous diet and ability to adapt to a wide variety of habitats.
- They may live approximately 40 years.

### Diagnostic Characteristics

- The Red-Eared Slider is a medium sized, freshwater turtle.
- Their most notable feature is the oblong patch of red on either side of their head.
- The carapace may be approximately 4 1/2 to 11 1/2 inches in length.
- Both the skin and the carapace are olive to brown with yellow striped or spots.
- The male Red-Eared Slider is typically smaller than the female, and will have a long, thick tail.

### Introduction and Movement

- The Red-Eared Slider is native to the eastern United States and adjacent areas of Mexico.
- They have been introduced to portions of Europe, Africa, South America, Asia, and the western United States.
- Red-Eared Sliders have been produced on turtle farms in the United States since the early 1970's for the Pet Trade.
- More than 52 million turtles were produced between 1989 and 1997.
- Owners have released their turtles intentionally due to their size and care requirements.

### Prevention Strategy

- Thoroughly research any animal you would like to own, and ensure you are aware of your local laws and regulations.
- To prevent accidental introductions, ensure that all watercraft, wading gear, and other water related equipment are clean, drained, and dry between use in each waterbody.
- Never release any animal or plant into the wild.
- Can escape from pet trade facilities, enclosures, or water gardens.
- Always Remember: **DON'T LET IT LOOSE**

CLEAN & DRAIN & DRY

#### Sources

- CABI Invasive Species Compendium: <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/61560>.



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