

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Bureau of Wildlife
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-4754
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Re: Close the Terrapin Hunting Season in New York

We, the undersigned scientists—with collective expertise in conservation biology, ecology, population dynamics, wildlife management and other areas relevant to turtle conservation—urge the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to follow through with its informal rulemaking proposal and amend its regulations to end the harvest of wild terrapins in state waters.

Because diamondback terrapins depend on high adult survivorship, long lives, and repeated reproductive opportunities to exist, loss of even a small number of terrapins can result in drastic population declines. In fact, scientists have repeatedly found that due to their life history characteristics, turtles cannot sustain any significant level of wild collection without suffering population declines.

Under current New York regulations, holders of a diamondback terrapin license may take unlimited numbers of legal-sized wild terrapins during a nine-month open season. The science shows that this policy is at odds with successful conservation of the species. To ensure the health and survival of New York's terrapins and the estuaries they inhabit, we ask that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation promptly close the harvest season for terrapins.

Sincerely,

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