

Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

ERNST, CARL H. 1980. *Rhinoclemmys areolata*.***Rhinoclemmys areolata*
(Duméril and Bibron)
Furrowed land terrapin**

Emys areolata Duméril and Bibron, In Duméril and Duméril, 1851:10. Type-locality, "Province du Petén (Amér. centr.)"; restricted to Flores, El Petén, Guatemala by Dunn and Stuart (1951:60). Holotype, adult female, Mus. Nat. Hist. Natur. Paris 9424 collected by M. Morelet in 1847-1848 (examined by author).

Malaclemmys concentrica areolata: Gray, 1855:38.

Clemmys areolata: Strauch, 1862:33.

Chelopsus areolatus: Cope, 1865:186.

Nicoria punctularia var. *areolata*: Boulenger, 1889:124.

Geomyda punctularia areolata: Siebenrock, 1909:498.

Geomyda punctularia areolata: Ruthven, 1912:328.

Geomyda areolata: Wettstein, 1934:18.

Geomyda areolata: Pearse, 1945:223.

Rhinoclemmys areolata: McDowell, 1964:267.

Rhinoclemmys areolata: Smith and Taylor, 1966:12. First use of combination.

Geomyda areolata: Hoffmann, 1969:213. Lapsus calami.

Callopsis areolata: Smith and Smith, 1975:5.

- CONTENT. *Rhinoclemmys areolata* is a monotypic species.

- DEFINITION. Adults grow to 206 mm in carapace length, no sexual dimorphism. The high ovoid (wider posteriorly than anteriorly) carapace is smooth in older animals but rugose in the young. It bears a middorsal keel, is slightly serrated posteriorly, and has flared or upturned lateral marginals. The color of the carapace is usually olive with dark seams and much yellow mottling forming a lichen-like pattern, but tan to black in some. Each pleural has a small yellow, often dark bordered, central spot which disappears with age. The unhinged plastron is well developed, slightly upturned anteriorly, and notched posteriorly; it is yellow with a dark central blotch and dark seams. The bridge is yellow. The head is small, has a slightly projecting snout, and has a notched upper jaw. A yellow or red stripe runs posteriorly

from the orbit to the side of the neck, two elongate red or yellow spots lie on the nape, and another stripe runs between the orbit and tympanum. Each eyelid bears a light vertical bar. A light stripe may run from the snout posteriorly along the upper jaw to the tympanum. The lower jaw and chin have black spots or ocelli. The feet are slightly webbed. The forelegs are covered with large yellow, black-spotted scales. The skin in other areas is olive, brown, or yellow. Males have concave plastrons and slightly longer tails with the vent beyond the carapacial margin; females have flat plastrons and shorter tails with the vent beneath the carapace.

- DESCRIPTIONS. The best descriptions of adults are given by Günther (1885), Boulenger (1889), Siebenrock (1909), Ruthven (1912), Pritchard (1967), Freiberg (1972), and Ernst (1978). Winokur and Legler (1974, 1975) give descriptions of the rostral pores and mental glands, Parsons (1960, 1968) choanal structure, Zug (1966) penial morphology, Ewert (1979) the egg.

- ILLUSTRATIONS. A color photograph of an adult is in Pritchard (1967); black and white photographs or drawings in Günther (1885), Wermuth and Mertens (1961), Freiberg (1972), and Murphy (1973). Zug (1966) illustrates the penis.

- DISTRIBUTION. *Rhinoclemmys areolata* occurs in southern Veracruz, Tabasco, eastern Chiapas to Yucatan in Mexico southward through Belize and eastern Guatemala. There is also a questionable record from the Rio Segovia of eastern Honduras (U.S. Nat. Mus. Natur. Hist. 24539).

- FOSSIL RECORD. No fossils of *Rhinoclemmys areolata* have been found; Stuart (1934) reports an archeological record from Uaxactun, northern El Petén, Guatemala.

- PERTINENT LITERATURE. *Rhinoclemmys areolata* lacks an extensive literature. Important references are listed by topic. Taxonomy: Strauch (1890), McDowell (1964), Ernst (1978). Type-locality: Dunn and Stuart (1951). Habitat: Stuart (1935). Cloacal bursae: Smith and James (1958). Choanal structure: Parsons (1960, 1968). Rostral pores and mental glands: Winokur and Legler (1974, 1975). Parasites: Pearse (1936), Herrera-Rosales C. (1951), Hoffmann (1962, 1969), Ernst and Ernst (1975, 1977). Defensive posturing: Dodd (1978). Reproduction: Ewert (1979).

- ETYMOLOGY. The specific name *areolata* is derived from the Latin word *areola* meaning a small open space and, according to the original description, refers to the pattern on the vertebrals and marginals.

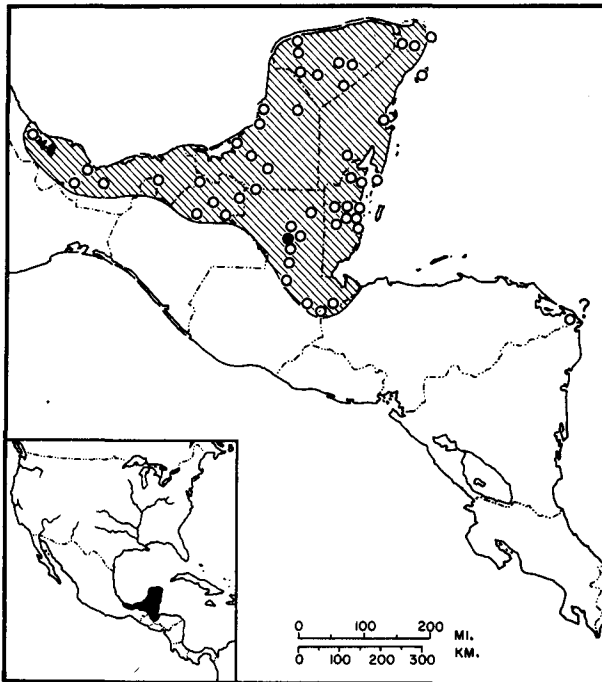
COMMENT

Dunn and Stuart (1951:60) objected to Smith and Taylor's (1950:30) restriction of the type-locality of *Rhinoclemmys areolata* to La Libertad, pointing out that Morelet only spent a night at La Libertad before continuing to Flores where he stayed six weeks and purchased many specimens from natives. They proposed that the holotype of *R. areolata* was more likely collected in the vicinity of Flores than at La Libertad.

Although this is a common turtle in some areas, its biology is little known and intensive field studies are needed.

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MAP. The solid circle marks the type-locality; open circles indicate other selected localities.

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