

Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

Seidel, Michael E. 1989. *Trachemys dorbignii*.

***Trachemys dorbignii* (Duméril and Bibron)
Orbigny's Slider**

Emys dorbignii Duméril and Bibron, 1835:272. Type-locality, "...Buenos-Ayres..." Holotype, Mus. Nat. Hist. Natur., Paris 9221, adult female, collected (origin) by Aicidé D'Orbigny (not examined by author).

Clemmys orbignyi: Fitzinger, 1835:124.

Emys d'orbignii: Gray, 1844:22.

Emys orbignyi: D'Orbigny and Bibron, 1847:Pl 1.

Clemmys d'orbignii: Strauch, 1862:33.

Pseudemys ? berardi: Gray, 1863:182. Non *Emys berardi* Duméril and Bibron. Type-locality, "Buenos Ayres." Holotype, not designated.

Clemmys dorbignyi: Boulenger, 1886:424.

Chrysemys dorbignyi: Boulenger, 1889:80.

Chrysemys d'orbignyi: Goeldi, 1906:710.

Pseudemys dorbignii: Mertens, Müller, and Rust, 1934:60.

Pseudemys d'orbignii: Lopes, Wagner, Barros, and Marques, 1954:190.

Chrysemys dorbignii: McDowell, 1964:274.

Pseudemys dorbignii: Pritchard, 1967:80.

Pseudemys scripta dorbignii: Moll and Legler, 1971:4.

Pseudemys scripta dorbignii: Pritchard, 1979:120.

Trachemys dorbignii: Ward, 1980:275.

Chrysemys d'orbignii: Belló and Rummler, 1980:811.

Trachemys scripta dorbignii: Alderton, 1989:25.

Trachemys dorbignii: King and Burke, 1989:61.

• **Content.** Two subspecies are recognized: *dorbignii* and *brasiliensis*. See Comment.

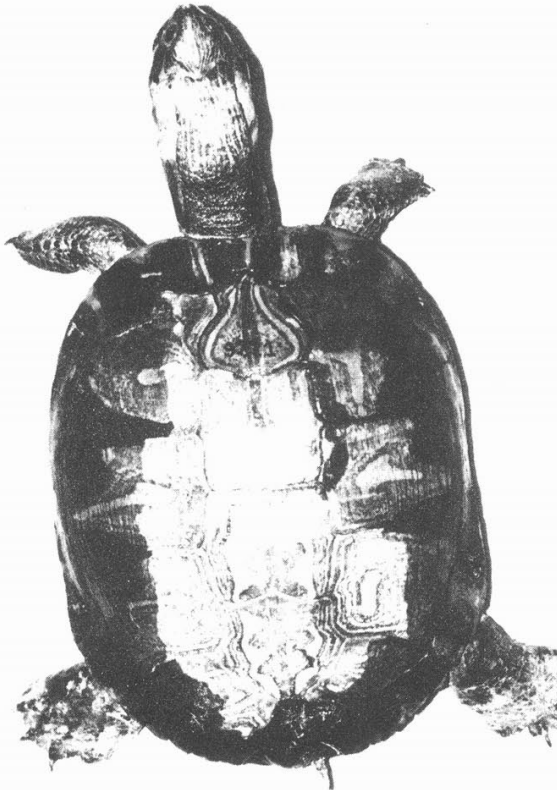
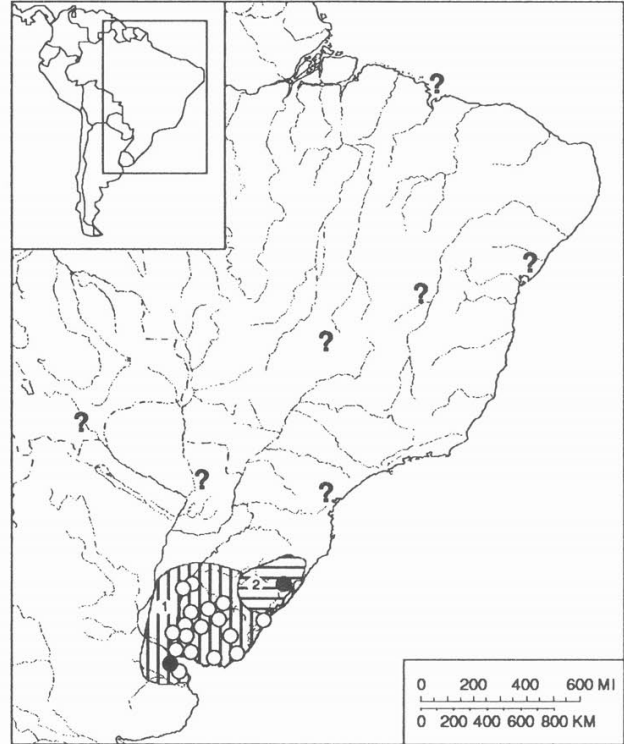


Figure 1. Dorsal view of the holotype of *Trachemys dorbignii* (MNHN 9221).



Map. Solid circles mark the type-localities. Hollow circles mark other reported localities. Question marks indicate doubtful records.

• **Definition.** A moderately-sized slider, males reaching a maximum carapace length of about 230 mm, females about 250 mm. The adult carapace is oval with straight or slightly curved sides and a serrated posterior rim. The ground color of the carapace is brown to olive with an elongate vertical yellow or orange bar on each pleural scute. This bar may bend or branch to form a "Y" figure. A pair of similar markings is also found along the midline of each vertebral scute. The marginal scutes have dark ocellate markings overlapping the dorsal and ventral seams. The plastron is yellow or orange with a large wavy figure extending laterally from the center along the plastral seams. This symmetrical pattern may cover most of the plastron. The ground color of the head, neck, and limbs is olive to dark brown marked with lines of yellow or orange. An elongate oval yellow stripe extends posteriorly below each corner of the jaw. The supratemporal and orbitocervical stripes are typically broad along the sides of the head, especially at the temporal region. Adult males become melanistic with age, and in old individuals the shell and soft parts may be entirely covered with irregular brown and black markings. Compared to females, males have longer foreclaws, a narrower shell, and a longer and broader tail. In dorsal view, the shell of hatchlings is nearly circular and their green carapace is conspicuously marked with yellow or orange.

• **Descriptions.** General descriptions are in Duméril and Bibron (1835), Gray (1844, 1856), Boulenger (1889), Goeldi (1906), Siebenrock (1909), Freiberg (1969), Pritchard (1979), Ward (1980), and Ernst and Barbour (1989).

• **Illustrations.** Photographs are in Freiberg (1967a, 1981) and Pritchard (1979); Alderton (1989) included a photograph of an amelanistic specimen. Drawings are in D'Orbigny and Bibron (1847), Adler (1958), Wermuth and Mertens (1961), and Ward (1980). Freiberg (1967b) presented a photograph of the egg.

• **Distribution.** *T. dorbignii* ranges from extreme southern Brazil through Uruguay into northeastern Argentina. Questionable records exist for Bolivia (Pritchard and Trebbau, (1984), Paraguay (Mittermeier et al. 1980, Moll and Legler, 1971) and more northern regions of Brazil: São Paulo (Adler, 1958), Salvador and São Luis (Iverson, 1986), Goiás (Roger Bour, pers. comm.).

• **Pertinent Literature.** General accounts are in Pritchard (1979) and Freiberg (1981). Additional references are listed by topic: systematic relationships, Williams (1956) and Freiberg (1969); shell abnormality, Adler (1958); vernacular names, Mittermeier et al. (1980); sexual dimorphism, Freiberg (1967a); choanal structure, Parsons (1968); geographic distribution, Moll and Legler (1971), Obst (1983), Pritchard and Trebbau (1984), and Iverson (1986); endocrine function, Lopes et al. (1954), Marques (1967, 1970), Marroni et al. (1973), Rummmler et al. (1978a, b), Marques et al. (1979, 1982, 1984, 1985), Turyn et al. (1981), and Silva et al. (1984); hypothalamic and olfactory function, Wagner (1955), Rummmler and Belló (1977), Rummmler et al. (1978a, b), Rummmler (1979), Belló and Rummmler (1980), and Silva and Wasserman (1982); blood chemistry, Tondo (1958) and Reischl et al. (1979); parasites, Mane-Garzón and Holcman-Spector (1968a, b; 1973); food habits, Coelho et al. (1975); conservation, Camara (1983).

• **Comment.** Many authors have considered *T. dorbigni* a subspecies of *Trachemys scripta*. It is allied to the *T. scripta* complex and quite likely has the potential to interbreed with that species. However, because its range is so broadly disjunct from all other *Trachemys*, *T. dorbigni* is treated as a species.

• **Etymology.** The name *dorbigni* is a patronym for Alcide C. V. D'Orbigny, a French naturalist and paleontologist who first collected the turtle. The subspecies name *brasiliensis* is a toponym which refers to Brazil, the only country in which this form occurs.

1. *Trachemys dorbigni dorbigni* (Duméril and Bibron)

Emys dorbigni: Duméril and Bibron, 1835:272. See species account.

Pseudemys dorbignyi dorbignyi: Freiberg, 1969:308.

Pseudemys dorbigni dorbigni: Wermuth and Mertens, 1977:54.

Chrysemys dorbigni dorbigni: Freiberg, 1981:91.

Chrysemys scripta dorbigni: Obst, 1983:27.

Trachemys scripta dorbigni: Iverson, 1985:4.

• **Definition.** The soft parts of adult females are generally dark brown with orange markings. The plastron has a large dark marking on an orange background. The first vertebral is nearly square. Both anterior and posterior plastral lobes are nearly equal in width, and the interfemoral seam is usually less than the length of the interanal seam. Juveniles have semicircular markings on the pleurals with the open side directed posteriorly.

2. *Trachemys dorbigni brasiliensis* (Freiberg)

Pseudemys dorbignyi brasiliensis (Freiberg, 1969:301. Type-locality, "rio Guaíba, Porto Alegre, [Rio Grande do Sul] Brasil" Holotype, Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales 23628, female, collected by María Marques, 23 July 1966 (not examined by author).

Pseudemys dorbigni brasiliensis: Wermuth and Mertens, 1977:55.

Chrysemys dorbigni brasiliensis: Freiberg, 1981:92.

Chrysemys scripta brasiliensis: Obst, 1983:27.

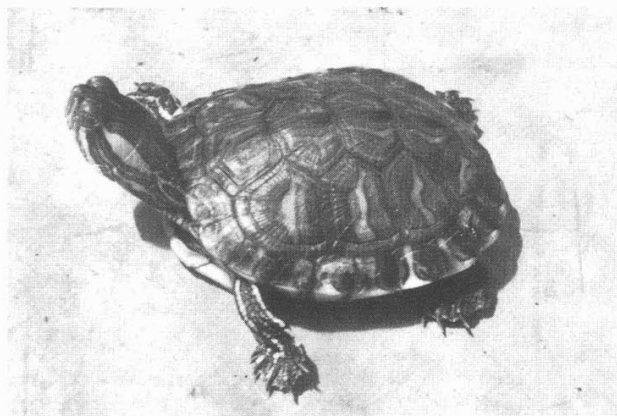


Figure 2. Juvenile *Trachemys dorbigni* (origin unknown).

Trachemys scripta brasiliensis: Iverson, 1985:4.

• **Definition.** The soft parts of adult females are olive green with yellow markings. The plastron of males is yellow with a greenish cast and often unmarked, whereas that of females has black markings on a yellow background. The hind margin of the first vertebral scute is notched, the posterior plastral lobe is wider than the anterior lobe, and the interfemoral seam is equal to or greater than the interanal seam. Juveniles are more brightly colored than those of the nominate subspecies, and have simple angular markings on the pleural scutes.

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