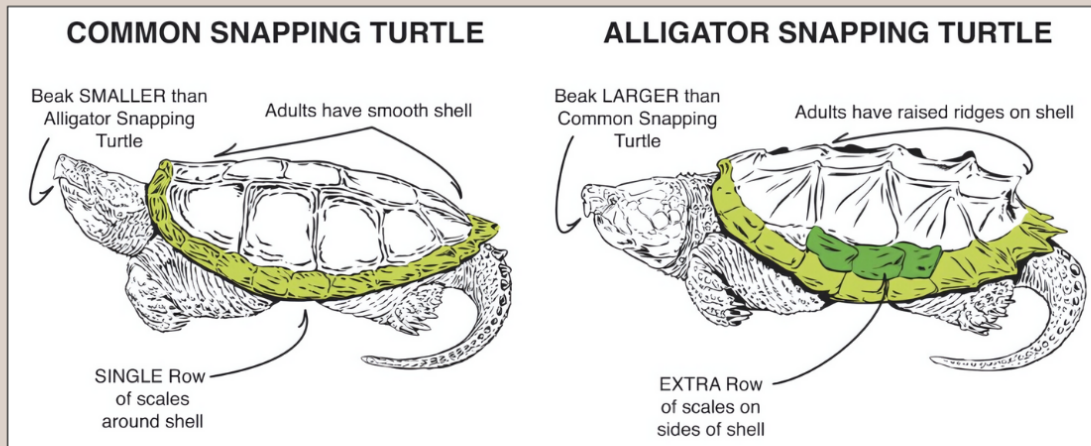


Know The Difference

Common vs. Alligator Snapping Turtles



Common Snapping Turtle

- Common Statewide
- Found in all types of water bodies
- Largest Recorded Size: 19 Inches; 86 lbs.
- Adults have smooth or relatively small keeled shells
- Head and Beak are much smaller
- Single row of marginal scutes (bony scales/plates on the shell)

Juvenile Traits

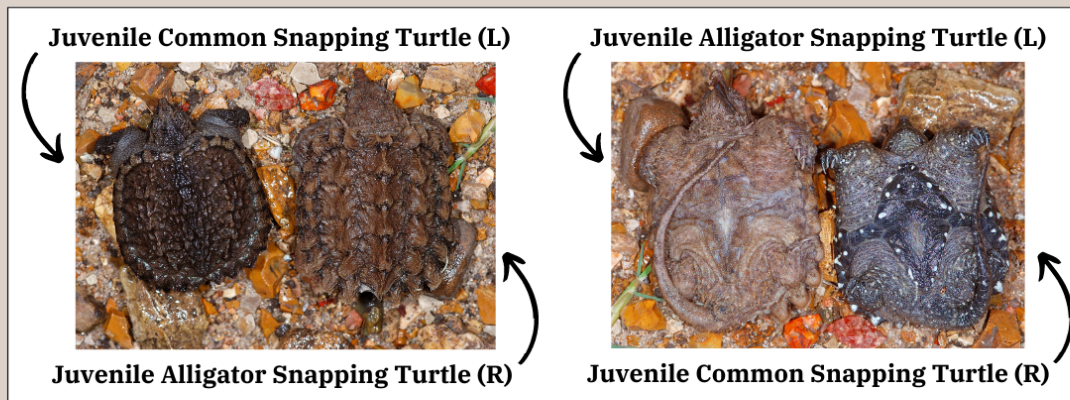
- Keeled Shell
- White Dots on bottom of shell (plastron)

Alligator Snapping Turtle

- Historically extirpated from Kansas. Reintroduction starting in 2024.
- Typically only found in rivers and their associated impoundments
- Largest Recorded Size: 32 Inches; 316 lbs.
- Adults have strongly keeled, rigid shells.
- Second partial row of marginal scutes (bony scales/plates on the shell)

Juvenile Traits

- Keeled Shell
- No white dots on bottom of shell (plastron)



The alligator snapping turtle is part of a recovery effort in the Verdigris and Neosho rivers in Kansas. Abandoned or unattended trotlines, setlines, and floatlines are a serious threat to turtles and other wildlife. Alligator Snapping turtles are easily snagged, usually on the upper shell behind the head. Trotlines, setlines and floatlines must be checked once every 24 hours. If an alligator snapping turtle is captured on your line, simply cut the line and free the turtle. If you believe you have found or caught an alligator snapping turtle, please take a photo (while maintaining a safe distance away from the animal) and send it to rare.species@ks.gov before releasing it back to the water.

