

REPTILIA: TESTUDINES: EMYDIDAE

GRAPTEMYS PULCHRA

Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

LOVICH, JEFFREY E. 1985. *Graptemys pulchra*.

***Graptemys pulchra* Baur
Alabama map turtle**

Graptemys pulchra Baur, 1893:675. Type-locality, "Montgomery [Montgomery Co.], Alabama"; Cochran (1961:231) expands this to "lake near Montgomery, Montgomery County, Alabama" based on the original entry in the U.S. Nat. Mus. ledger. Syntypes, adult females, U.S. Nat. Mus. 8808 (a, b), collected by T. H. Bean and L. Kumlien, July, 1876 (examined by author).

Graptemys pulchra: Chaney and Smith, 1950:323. Lapsus calami. *Malaclemys pulchra*: McDowell, 1964:274.

Graptemys puchra: Bertl and Killebrew, 1983:379. Lapsus calami.

• CONTENT. No subspecies are recognized.

• DEFINITION. Size dimorphism is pronounced with females attaining a carapace length of 292 mm and males 127 mm. The oval carapace is usually widest and highest near the middle and is serrated posteriorly. A strong median keel is present with laterally compressed knobs posteriorly situated on the vertebrals; the most prominent are on the second and third. These knobs become lower and less conspicuous with age, and may be virtually absent in large females. Carapace color ranges from olive to dull green with a median black stripe. The pleurals often have light reticulate markings, and the dorsal surface of each marginal is characterized by a yellowish bar or semicircle of varying width. Dark smudges or rings are often present on the ventral surface of each marginal and on the bridge. The hingeless yellow plastron is notched posteriorly and has a narrow black border along the posterior margin of each scute. The brown to olive head has a large light greenish or yellow interorbital-postorbital mark of variable shape. Lateral and dorsal head stripes may be continuous or broken. Chin stripes may be oriented transversely, longitudinally, or both. The upper jaw is neither hooked nor medially notched. The feet are webbed and the tail and limbs are striped. Females have a conspicuously enlarged head and hypertrophied jaws in comparison to males. The tail is long and thick in the male with the vent posterior to the margin of the carapace.

• DESCRIPTIONS. General descriptions are given by Baur (1893), Cagle (1952), Carr (1952), Wahlquist (1970), Ernst and Barbour (1972), Conant (1975), Mount (1975), Shealy (1978), and Pritchard (1979). Parsons (1960, 1968) describes the choanal structure. The karyotype is discussed by McKown (1972), Killebrew (1977), and Dobie (1981).

• ILLUSTRATIONS. Color illustrations of adults and juveniles are found in Ernst and Barbour (1972), Conant (1975), and Pritchard (1979). Other photographs and drawings are found in Cagle (1952), Carr (1952), Wermuth and Mertens (1961), Wahlquist (1970), Mount (1975), and Shealy (1976). Shealy (1976) presents photographs of eggs and hatchlings. Illustrations of skulls are found in Ernst and Barbour (1972), Gaffney (1979), and Dobie (1981). Photographs of nuchal and costal bones are in Dobie and Jackson (1979) and Dobie (1981). A karyogram is given in McKown (1972). Parsons (1968) presents an illustration of choanal structure.

• DISTRIBUTION. *Graptemys pulchra* occurs in the major drainage systems entering the Gulf of Mexico from the Pearl River (Bogue Chitto) in Louisiana and Mississippi eastward to the Yellow River in Florida and Alabama. Tinkle (1959) discusses the abundance and distribution of this species in relation to the fall line.

• FOSSIL RECORD. None.

• PERTINENT LITERATURE. The most comprehensive life history account is that of Shealy (1976). General accounts are in Cagle (1952), Carr (1952), Ernst and Barbour (1972), Conant (1975), Mount (1975), Shealy (1978), and Pritchard (1979). Additional references are listed by topic. Taxonomy: Carr (1949), McDowell (1964), McKown (1972), Little (1973), Wood (1977), Dobie and Jackson (1979), and Dobie (1981). Parasites: Shealy (1976) and Ernst and Ernst (1979). Hatchling behavior: Anderson (1958). Reproduction: Ewert (1979). Capture techniques: Chaney and Smith (1950) and Tinkle (1958). Variation in scute arrangements: Tinkle (1962) and Zangerl (1969). Longevity: Bowler (1977). Blood:

McKown (1972) and Frair (1977). Geographic distribution: Boyd and Vickers (1963), Cliburn (1971), Dobie (1972), and Harris et al. (1982).

• ETYMOLOGY. The name *pulchra* is derived from the Latin *pulcher* meaning beautiful.

COMMENT

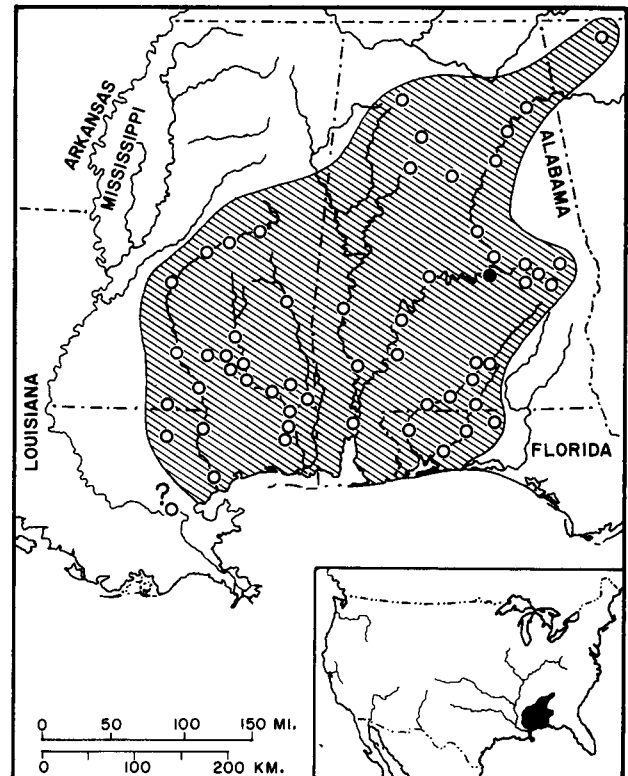
From the original description (Baur, 1893) to Cagle (1952), virtually nothing was known of this species.

Graptemys pulchra is highly variable with regard to carapace depth, coloration and pattern, and seam alignments. Shealy (1976) thought it contained at least four geographical variants, each confined to different river drainages.

The type-specimens were originally identified as *Malacoclemmys geographicus* (= *Graptemys geographicus*) (Yarrow, 1882:33). Cochran (1961:231) listed two different U.S. Nat. Mus. numbers for the syntypes (8808, 29526); the skull of one specimen had been removed and recatalogued with the osteological number 29526. However, both wet specimens and the dry skull are now catalogued as 8808.

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

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J. E. LOVICH, INSTITUTE OF ECOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, ATHENS, GEORGIA 30602.

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