

Turtles in My Backyard?

The Orianne Society's New Conservation Program is Underway

TIGER, GEORGIA, U.S.A, May 23, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Turtles are one of the most threatened groups of animals on the planet - over 60% of turtle species are facing extinction. Among them, the Wood Turtle, Spotted Turtle, Blanding's Turtle, and Bog Turtle populations in the northeastern United States are also declining. [The Orianne Society](#), a leading conservation organization, is determined to reverse this trend and save these four turtle species through their new [Hudson-Berkshire Turtle Conservation Program](#).

The Hudson-Berkshire region is the only place in the world where all four turtle species occur. Spanning the lower Hudson River Valley and surrounding areas, the region is home to a wide range of reptile and amphibian biodiversity. However, pressure to develop the land is strong, and the need to protect habitat here is critical.

The Hudson-Berkshire Turtle Conservation Program is geared towards restoring the turtles' habitat, protecting open spaces, and conserving the populations in the region. The program comprises several initiatives, including population assessments, landowner outreach, nest site restoration, and conservation planning.



Despite their bright orange legs, Wood Turtles manage to stay out of sight. Photo credit: Kiley Briggs



A family meeting their first Wood Turtles, on the land they have lived on and farmed for many years.

Kiley Briggs, The Orianne Society's Director of Conservation, and his team are in the field conducting their initial turtle surveys, meeting private landowners, and homing in on key areas in the region where critical habitat overlaps with opportunities for restoration and conservation. Kiley reports that some residents don't realize they have rare turtles living in their own backyards.

"'I've lived here for over 50 years, and if there were any orange-legged turtles in the river here I'd know about it.' I've heard this line and others like it from people many times, even at places where I know there are Wood Turtles. Even in places where Wood Turtles are still somewhat common, they fly under the radar. For that reason, one of the most rewarding parts of my job is when I get to walk a streambank with a landowner and show them this marvelous animal that has lived in their backyard for decades, sometimes longer than the landowner has been alive." - Kiley Briggs

The time to act is now! These four turtle species in the Hudson-Berkshire region are at great risk and are disappearing right under our noses. The Orianne Society is calling for support in their turtle conservation efforts. A generous donor has agreed to match all funds raised for the Hudson-Berkshire Turtle Conservation Program up to \$20,000. Donate today, and your investment in conservation will be doubled! Learn more about the program and [how to support turtle conservation on our website](#).

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About The Orianne Society: The Orianne Society is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that focuses on the conservation of reptiles, amphibians, and their ecosystems. By conducting research, implementing conservation action and educating the public about the importance of these species, the organization seeks to protect and restore reptile and amphibian populations in the places most important to them.

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