

Hope for Spotted Turtles: Orianne Society Discovers New Population in Georgia

TIGER, GA, UNITED STATES, April 8, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In an exciting breakthrough for turtle conservation, biologists with [The Orianne Society](#) have uncovered a previously unknown population of the elusive and imperiled Spotted Turtle (*Clemmys guttata*) in southern Georgia, injecting a surge of hope into efforts to conserve this species.

The groundbreaking find, made by the Society's Spotted Turtle monitoring team, included four individuals at an entirely new site—a rare event in Georgia, where new sightings are usually limited to road captures. This marks a critical breakthrough in understanding where these charismatic turtles may still be holding on.

"Every new population of Spotted Turtles is significant," said Emma Kendrick, Spotted Turtle Technician for The Orianne Society. "These turtles are an imperiled species, and identifying new habitats helps us better understand and protect them."

Three of the turtles were fitted with tiny radio transmitters, and what happened next stunned even the experts. One tagged female turtle led the team deep into unexpected wetland territory, revealing habitat choices that could reshape what we know about this secretive species. Even better? Yet another turtle was found while tracking the others--adding to the count and



Adult Spotted Turtle - Photo by Ben Stegenga



Spotted Turtle hatchling - Photo by Ben Stegenga

reinforcing hopes for a thriving local group.

“Spotted Turtles have become one of our focal species over the last decade,” said Dr. Houston Chandler, Director of Science for The Orianne Society. “It’s an exhilarating moment when you realize there’s still so much left to discover about them.”

A Decade of Dedication—and a Major Payoff

The Orianne Society has been tracking and researching Spotted Turtles extensively across the Southeast since 2014. This latest find is part of a sweeping, multi-state initiative—funded by a Competitive State Wildlife Grant—to conserve the species before it’s too late. Together with partners at North Carolina State University, the Smithsonian’s National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute, and multiple state agencies, surveys are underway across six southeastern states. The ultimate goal? A regional conservation plan to secure the Spotted Turtle’s future in the Southeast.

Why This Matters: Spotted Turtles Are in Peril

These eye-catching, yellow-spotted reptiles are more than just beautiful—they’re vital to the ecosystems they call home. But they’re fighting a perfect storm of threats:

Habitat destruction

Collection for the pet trade

Road mortality and population isolation

With lifespans of 30+ years but painfully slow reproductive rates, even small losses can devastate local populations. It’s a conservation tightrope—and one misstep can send populations into free fall.

Listed as endangered in Canada and on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List, Spotted Turtles are now at a crossroads.

A World of Possibility.

This exciting find proves that Spotted Turtles still have secrets to share—and that with dedication, science, and heart, there’s still time to turn the tide. But time is running out.

Join the mission. Be part of the discovery.

[Learn more about Spotted Turtles](https://www.oriannesociety.org) and support conservation at www.oriannesociety.org



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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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