

Animal Fact Sheet

Name: _____ Date: _____



Florida Softshell Turtle

Apalone ferox

The Florida Softshell Turtle is a large, aquatic turtle native to the southeastern United States, particularly in Florida. It is easily recognized by its smooth, leathery shell, elongated snorkel-like snout, and its ability to breathe underwater.

Quick facts

Classification: Reptile

Family: Trionychidae

Habitat: Freshwater lakes, rivers, ponds, and marshes

Diet: Carnivore

Conservation status: Least Concern

Lifespan: 20-30 years

Weight: 6-13 kg (13-29 lbs)

Scientific name: *Apalone ferox*

Did you know?

- Unlike most turtles, the Florida Softshell Turtle breathes using its specialized pharyngeal lining, allowing it to absorb oxygen from water while submerged.
- Florida Softshell Turtles can bury themselves in sandy bottoms, leaving only their nostrils exposed to breathe. They are among the fastest swimming turtles.

What I learned
