



## **Painted Turtle** **(*Chrysemys picta*)**

### **Identifying Features:**

**Painted turtles shell length is 10 inches, or 25 cm. Its shell is used to protect it from its predators. The bottom of the Painted turtle's shell has a beautiful design that looks painted.**

### **Found:**

**Common in North America, it is a water turtle related to other water turtles like sliders and cooters. This turtle lives in ponds, lakes, marshes, and in slow-moving rivers that have soft, muddy bottoms. At the Cathance Preserve, they can be found in the vernal pool.**

### **Natural History:**

**Painted turtles are most active from March to October. During the winter painted turtles hibernate by burying themselves deep in the mud beneath streams and ponds. The turtle may submerge itself in up to three feet of mud under less than six feet of water. The painted turtle spends most of its time in the water, but can often be seen lying in the sun on floating logs or on rocks by the**

**shore. This behavior is called basking. Some turtles bask simply by floating on the surface of the water. Painted turtles bask because they cannot generate heat or regulate their own body temperature. Basking is done cautiously because overheating can kill a turtle within minutes.**