

# Snapping Turtles vs. Other Turtles

Feature	Snapping Turtle ( <i>Chelydra serpentina</i> )	Other Muskoka Turtles (Painted, Blanding's, Map, Musk)
<b>Shell Structure</b>	Small plastron (bottom shell); cannot fully retract	Larger plastron; many can partially/fully retract
<b>Defense Strategy</b>	Snaps, lunges, active defense	Withdraw into shell, passive defense
<b>Temperament</b>	Defensive on land	Generally shy and non-aggressive
<b>Size</b>	Largest freshwater turtle in Ontario (up to ~40 cm shell)	Smaller overall
<b>Appearance</b>	Long spiked tail, large head, rugged shell	Smoother shells, shorter tails, often more colourful
<b>Habitat Use</b>	Highly aquatic; rarely leaves water	More flexible; bask frequently on land/logs
<b>Movement on Land</b>	Slow, awkward, defensive	Slow but less reactive
<b>Swimming Ability</b>	Strong, powerful swimmer	Good swimmers, less powerful
<b>Diet</b>	Opportunistic omnivore; major scavenger	More varied; often selective feeders
<b>Clutch Size</b>	Large (30–60 eggs)	Smaller (5–15 eggs typical)
<b>Age at Maturity</b>	Late (17–20+ years)	Earlier (varies by species)
<b>Lifespan</b>	100+ years (possibly much more)	30–80+ years
<b>Winter Survival</b>	Underwater; often exposed on bottom; very low oxygen tolerance	Underwater; often buried or in oxygen-rich areas
<b>Basking</b>	Less frequent (more common in northern range)	Common behaviour
<b>Biggest Threat</b>	Road mortality (especially nesting females)	Same threats; some species more at risk