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Common snapping turtle eats duck eggs.—In the present note we report observations of a common snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*) predated duck eggs. This behavior apparently has not been mentioned previously in the literature, although predation of ducklings by snapping turtles may be common (Babcock 1919, Carr 1952).

On 10 May 1993 while photographing ducks at Three Lakes Park in western Henrico County, Virginia, we observed a common snapping turtle taking individual eggs from several duck nests. The turtle was first observed at approximately 20:10 DST. It came out of a 1-ha pond onto a small island (9 × 10 m) on which Mallards and domestic ducks (*Anas platyrhynchos*) and Muscovies (*Cairina moschata*), were nesting. As it approached the nests, all of the ducks left the island except for one domestic duck which stood by her nest. The turtle went to this nest and removed a single egg, carrying it whole in its mouth back to the water. The turtle disappeared from view underwater, but returned to the island several minutes later. We did not see it eating the eggs, but each egg was well within the turtle's mouth when last seen. This process was repeated at least four times before it became too dark to see the island. The site was checked the next day and all of the nests were empty and abandoned. Mallards nested again on the island three weeks later, but these nests were abandoned within a week. It appeared that only a single large turtle was involved. Its carapace length was estimated from photographs to be 30–40 cm.

While predation of a wide variety of live animals by common snapping turtles has been documented, no previous reports of turtles eating bird eggs are known to us (Alexander 1943, Lagler 1943, Carr 1952, Ernst and Barbour 1977). If turtles are capable of learning to recognize eggs as food, their predation of nests could become an important source of nest failure for waterfowl.

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