

2[34]:1-12). The worms attached to the two *H. maximiliani* also appear to be *T. brevicornis*, representing a new host record for the worm. The only other epizootic commensal reported from this turtle genus was the barnacle *Balanus improvisus* from an Argentine *H. tectifera* (Frazier 1986. Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington 99:472-477).

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MALACLEMYS TERRAPIN TERRAPIN (Northern Diamondback Terrapin). **REPRODUCTION and NEST PREDATION.** Information on clutch size and rate of nest predation of northern diamondback terrapins along the Connecticut and New York coasts of Long Island Sound has been limited to infrequent observations of small samples of isolated individuals. Klemens (1993. Amphibians and Reptiles of Connecticut and Adjacent Regions. State Geol. Nat. Hist. Surv. Connecticut Bull. 112:1-318) reported a diamondback terrapin collected from Fairfield, Connecticut, USA containing 12 eggs, a nest in Westport, Connecticut containing 13 eggs, three clutches in Rye, New York containing 8, 11, and 15 eggs, and eleven clutches from the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, New York with a mean clutch size of 14.9 eggs.

During a population study of *Malaclemys terrapin terrapin* in 1994, a relatively large nesting site was discovered adjacent to a tidal creek along the Neck River in Madison, Connecticut. The nests were concentrated in a flat, sandy area (30 x 100 m) approximately 10 m from the creek. Sparse vegetative cover consisted of several bayberry bushes (*Myrica pennsylvanica*), poison ivy (*Rhus radicans*), and beach grass (*Ammophila breviligulata*). The area was bordered by a large expanse of *Spartina* salt marsh. Ten female *M. t. terrapin* were captured and measured during the 1993-1994 nesting seasons [mean carapace length (SLC) = 183.1 mm; SD = 7.43, mean plastron length (SLP) = 164.6 mm; SD = 7.14]. Maximum nesting activity was observed at high tide during the early daylight hours of 1-5 July 1994. From 1-31 July 1994, 33 nests were located. Clutch sizes were determined by excavating nests and counting eggs, and counting shells from nests opened by predators. Clutches ranged from 4 to 16 eggs with a mean clutch size of 9.6 (N = 33; SD = 3.58). Predators destroyed the entire clutch in each of the 33 nests (316 eggs). Numerous footprints throughout the area and bite patterns in the egg shells suggested that raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) were the only predators. They exhumed all eggs from each nest, consumed the contents, and discarded the shells within a few centimeters of the nest hole, often in a neat pile.

The observed mean clutch size (mean = 9.6) of this Connecticut population is similar to the mean clutch size (mean = 9.2, N = 237) reported by Burger (1977. Am. Midl. Nat. 97: 444-464) in a two-year study of a population of *M. t. terrapin* along the southern coast of New Jersey. Clutch sizes have been reported to be slightly lower in the southern subspecies. Hildebrand (1932. Zoologica. 9:551-563) noted that the "usual number" of eggs laid at one time by *M. t. centrata* x *M. t. terrapin* in captivity was eight. Burns and Williams (1972. J. Herpetol. 6:238-239) found that captive *M. t. pileata* produced a mean clutch size of 8.5 (N = 11) in Louisiana. Seigel (1980. Trans. Kansas Acad. Sci. 83:239-

246) reported a mean clutch size of 6.7 (N = 14) for a population of *M. t. tequesta* on the Atlantic coast of Florida. The present findings in Connecticut provide further evidence that the diamondback terrapin produces larger average clutch sizes in the northern part of its range.

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PODOCNEMIS UNIFILIS (Yellow-headed Sideneck). **NESTING.** *Podocnemis unifilis* is a medium to large pelomedusid turtle widely distributed throughout the Orinoco and Amazon River basins in South America. The species is of considerable importance as human food during the dry season, with both eggs and turtles being consumed or sold in large quantities throughout the species' range (Johns 1987. Oryx 21:25-28; Mittermeier 1978. Oryx 14:222-230). Commonly referred to as the tracajá in Brazil, nests of this species have been widely reported as shallow holes dug in sandy or loamy substrates along rivers and streams (Foote 1978. Herpetologica 34:333-339; Thorbjarnarson et al. 1993. J. Herpetol. 27:344-347).

Tracajá are known to inhabit streams and lakes in flooded forest, or *várzea*, in the Brazilian Amazon, including in the Mamirauá Ecological Station (MES), Amazonas, Brazil, located 30 km upstream of the town of Tefé. The MES consists of extensive lake and marsh habitat interspersed with forest (low and high *restinga* forest) in a broad floodplain at the confluence of the Amazon (Solimoes) and Japura Rivers (Ayres 1993. As Matas de Várzea do Mamirauá. CNPq, Brasilia. 123 pp.). Tracajá are known to inhabit regions of extensive *várzea*, but were tacitly assumed to migrate into riverine habitats for nesting in sandy beach substrates.

On 28 September 1994, while searching for nests of black caiman (*Melanosuchus niger*), we located a nest of *P. unifilis* on a floating mat of vegetation and organic matter (Fig. 1) in a small lake (Lago Sanguessuga; S 02° 58.96', W 64° 55.57') within the MES. The nest was made in organic soil composed principally of partly decomposed leaves, in the elevated root mat of a fallen tree (*Symmeria paniculata*; Polygonaceae; "Carauçu"). The water level of the lake had fallen so that the organic mat, which would float during periods of high water, was resting on the lake bottom. The nest was found approximately one month before the average annual minimum water level is attained at MES.

The nest cavity was 65 cm above the bottom of the organic mat, but 15 cm below the mat's highest point, and had been recently opened by a predator (probably *Tupinambis nigropunctatus*). Three eggs remained in the nest cavity, and the remains of 19 others were scattered up to 5 m from the nest. The mean size of the three entire eggs was: 3.83 cm (length), 3.04 cm (diam), and 20.9 g. All three eggs in the nest cavity were opaque on their upper halves, translucent below, suggesting that they had been laid within two weeks of our finding them. The nest cavity was 17 cm deep and 13 cm wide.

According to a local informant (Sr. Revolver, pers. comm.), it is not unusual for tracajá to nest in similar substrates within the *várzea*. However, the sympatric *P. sextuberculata* and *P. expansa* were reported to always nest in sandy beaches along rivers. *Peltocephalus dumerilianus*, which lay much larger eggs (Pritchard and Trebbau 1984. The Turtles of Venezuela. SSAR Contrib. Herpetol. 2:1-403), are also reported to use fallen tree root mats