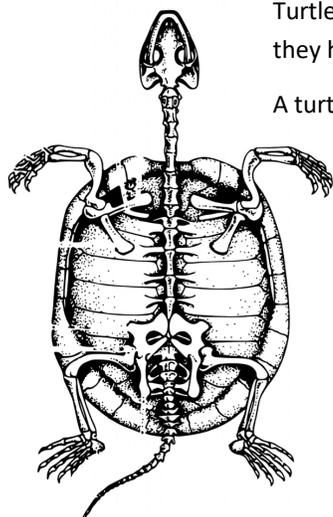


# Turtles

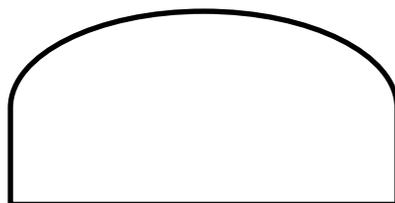
Turtles are **reptiles**. They are covered in protective **scales**. They are **ectothermic** (cold-blooded). And they hatch from soft, leathery **eggs**. A hard bony shell (**carapace**) makes turtles unique amongst reptiles.

A turtle's shell is not its home. It is made of the bones that create the spine (backbone) and ribs .



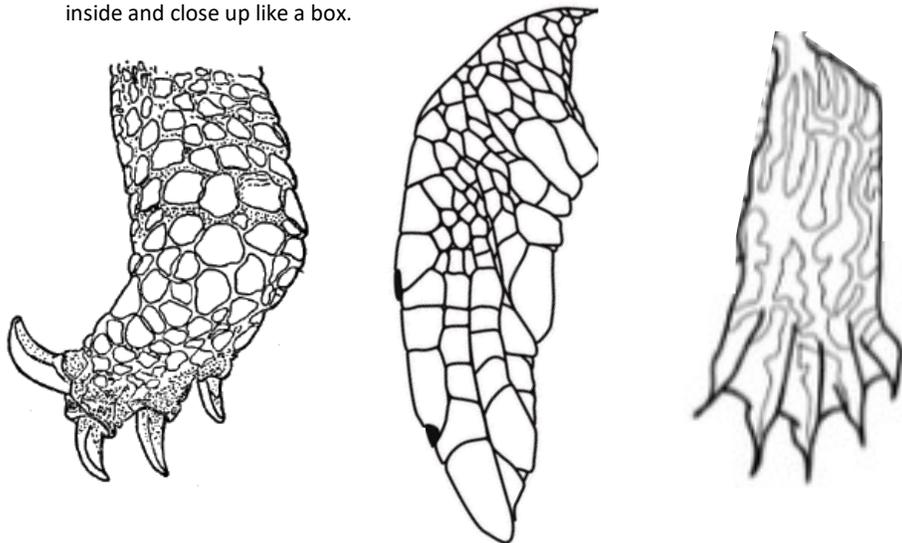
Draw a red oval around the turtle's spine & color the ribs yellow.

Turtles have physical adaptations that allow them to live in a variety of **habitats**. Generally, turtles live either on *land*, in *freshwater*, or in *salt water* (the ocean). **Aquatic** turtles that live in water will have shells that are adapted for swimming. They will be **hydrodynamic** (water will easily flow over them without drag.) Terrestrial turtles that live on land will have high, dome-shaped shells.



Write **Aquatic** in the shape that is hydrodynamic and write **Terrestrial** in the shape that best suits a turtle that lives on land.

The Eastern Box Turtle, the NC state reptile, has a shell with a specialized hinge on the **plastron** (belly) that lets the turtle tuck its head and legs inside and close up like a box.



Turtle feet are adapted for the way that they move within their habitat. **Label the feet to the left with the type of habitat that they match.**

Saltwater: long distance swimming, rarely on land

Freshwater: swimming short distances, climbing

Terrestrial: walking, climbing

Sea Turtles (saltwater) have large flippers for swimming. Freshwater turtles have webbed feet for swimming. Why do you think they are different?

Diamondback Terrapins are unique turtles that have adapted to thrive in aquatic habitats where freshwater from rivers mixes with saltwater. This mixed water is called \_\_\_\_\_ water.

\*Answers on the back.

