

## From the GCTTS Wiki

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## Annual East Texas Herp Breeder Sale!

The 15th Annual East Texas Herpetological Society's Breeder Expo and Educational Exhibit will be held Sunday, September 11th at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, located at 12801 Northwest Freeway (Hwy 290) in Houston.

Breeder shows like this one are the best places to obtain captive born reptiles. The Expo will be open to the public from 11 AM until 5 PM.

GCTTS will have an educational booth at this very heavily attended event, and are in need of volunteers. If you can help man our booth or exhibit animals, let us know by August 10th. A good working knowledge of turtles and tortoises will be needed for this event. We are also looking for set-up help at 9 AM. Admission is free for our volunteers.

More information on the conference, expo and sale: <http://www.eths.org/html/expo2005.htm>

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## Report Those Box Turtles!

Bob Smither  
GCTTS Member

Box turtle populations are on the decline in Texas, and elsewhere. Many of us are old enough to remember when it was unusual to drive through a rural area without seeing at least one of these native Texans. Now it is unusual to see them.

**The Box Turtle Partnership of Texas** (GCTTS is an active member of the Partnership) is working hard to gather the scientific data needed so that the state of Texas can take action to protect our box turtles. It is feared by many that without some form of protection, our Texas box turtle populations may be doomed.

The box turtle populations are being reduced by many factors, including the continuing chopping up of box turtle habitats by roads and the continuing collection of turtles from the wild for the pet trade.

Box turtle populations are fragile. Research has demonstrated that once an adult box turtle is displaced from its home range (which may be as small as a few acres) it will seldom settle into a new area, even if the new area is suitable habitat. The displaced turtles tend to continue to wander, often encountering deadly roadways as a result. Experiments with even very large preserves have shown that displaced turtles simply do not prosper.

Box turtles must have a minimum population density in order to sustain a population within a region. The removal of even a single reproducing adult from a population can have devastating consequences.

These issues and more are discussed in the Box Turtle Partnership of Texas's **FAQ** (Frequently Asked Questions).

Quoting from the **Turtle and Tortoise Newsletter**, 2000, 1:19, article by Martha Ann Messinger & George M. Patton:

"Act 81 of the 1999 Session of the Louisiana Legislature prohibits the commercial harvest of Louisiana's box turtle populations. This law, which became effective August 15, 1999, was unanimously passed by both the Louisiana Senate and the House of Representatives. This is an outstanding victory for one of Louisiana's turtles and will have far reaching impact on box turtles in other states."

The Box Turtle Partnership of Texas is gathering information to support a similar law in Texas.

One way that we can help with this effort is to report any sightings of box turtles in the field. This includes any that are found deceased. The GCTTS has an on-line reporting form that has been approved by representatives of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The form is linked from our home page at [www.GCTTS.org](http://www.GCTTS.org). Reports entered into our on-line form are e-mailed directly to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

The next time you see a box turtle in the field, report it! You just might be saving these charming critters for your children's generation.

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## Can You Help the GCTTS Turtle Shuttle?

GCTTS operates over the entire greater Houston area and as such relies on people to help shuttle and serve as drop-off and pick-up houses for turtles & tortoises. Our rehab people are quite overloaded making arrangements to get incoming turtles and sending out turtles that have been adopted to their

adoptive homes.

If you are able to help with transport, please indicate the areas of Houston you can help shuttle to and from.

If you are able to provide temporary housing of incoming and outgoing GCTTS turtles & tortoises until they are picked up by a shuttle volunteer, please let us know.

We are also looking for someone to manage the "turtle shuttle". This would involve maintaining contact information on the drop-off, pick-up volunteers, and shuttle volunteers, and making all turtle shuttling arrangements.

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