

Directions for Completion of the Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Field Record Report Form

May 18, 2004

Summary

The Field Record Report form was developed and tested in order to satisfy minimum information requirements when reporting turtles found in a variety of different situations in the field. The directions below explain use of the various fields in the form, as well as the classification system, and details relevant to administration.

Sections 1-13 of the form must be completed for each field record in order to qualify the record for the atlas. Sections 14-22 are optional, and should be completed where information is available.

Description of Form Use

1. Species (Required)

Scientific name

2. Common Name

English name given to the species

3. Date of Observation (Required)

The date that the turtle was observed in the field

4. Record Number

Leave this section blank, as it refers to the database number given for each entry

5. Name of Location (Required)

The site name of the area where the observation occurred. For example; Kirirom National Park. If there is no name for the source area, please give the district designation

6. District (Required)

The name of the district where the turtle was reported/observed

7. Province (Required)

Name of the province where the turtle was reported/observed

8. Country (Required)

Name of the country where the turtle was reported/observed

9. Reported by (Required)

Name of the person and their organizational affiliation who made the observation (or took the report)

10. Identified by (Required)

Name of the person and their organizational affiliation who identified the species

11. Observation type (Required)

This field includes four possible answers:

- **Live specimen:** The turtle was alive at the time of observation
- **Dead specimen:** The turtle was dead at the time of observation

- **Shell/skull, remains:** The turtle was observed in the form of historical evidence
- **Unknown:** No evidence was observed. This field will be used when the record is reported in an interview or is present in a report that can not be substantiated based on lack of evidence.

12. Voucher type (Required)

Indicate whether the field record is supported by a photograph, specimen or other evidence

- **Photograph:** Photograph of the turtle. It is best to photograph both the carapace and plastron of the specimen. Photos should be submitted with the field record report.
- **Specimen/remains:** Indicate if the turtle was taken as a voucher specimen or if a shell, plastron or other evidence was recovered to support the observation (see special note below regarding the taking of voucher specimens)
- **None:** No photograph, specimen or other evidence was taken.

13. Classification of Report (Required)

A1 Observed in the wild: The turtle was observed within its natural habitat (observed in the wild)

A2 Observed in possession of a hunter/fisherman/other person(s) within the source area: The turtle was observed in the possession of a person(s) but within its native habitat. Example: A hunter is stopped in the forest and the contents of his bag inspected resulting in the discovery of a turtle.

B1 Observed in captivity within a community in close proximity to the source area: The turtle is observed in possession of a person(s) in immediate proximity to the source area where the turtle is reported to have been captured by the person(s). Example: The turtle is observed in the house of a hunter who claims that he found the turtle in the neighboring forest.

B2 Observed in the local trade: The turtle is observed in the possession of a person(s) that did not actually find the turtle in the wild, but received it from a third party. The person(s) claim to be able to identify the source area. Example: The turtle is found in the possession of a local trader who buys turtles from hunters in the village. He does not possess personal knowledge of the capture, but may be able to identify the source area where the turtle came.

C1 Reported in interview: The turtle observation was reported in an interview with a specific source area identified.

C2 Site-specific record from a report or other source without further reference: The observation was annotated in a report of from another source without details as to the conditions or reliability of the record.

14. Sex

Male, female, or unknown

15. Age class

Adult, sub-adult, juvenile, hatchling, unknown (Age class can be easily determined given the varying sizes and age of maturity of different species).

16. Length

Straight-line measurement of the carapace length.

17. Width

Straight-line measurement of the carapace width.

18. Weight**19. Additional Locality Information**

A further description of the location if needed or applicable.

Example 1: The turtle was found in the spring on the east side of Mac Village in Van Phuong Commune, village where the stream meets the rice field.

20. GPS Coordinates (if known)

The GPS coordinates of the capture/observation site. Report only for A1, A2, and B1 records if available.

21. Describe circumstances of observation/report

Describe the circumstances that relate to the classification of the report that was used.

For example:

A1: A field survey team located the turtle in a shallow stream during night surveys

A2: The turtle was confiscated from a woman collecting snails in the forest.

B1: The hunter showed us a turtle shell that he had in his house

B2: The trader reported that he had bought the turtle from a boy that found it while grazing his buffalo in the park.

C1: The turtle was described as one of the common species living in the area during interviews carried out in XX village.

C2: The turtle was reported as present in the nature reserve in a report by WWF

22. Additional notes and information

Additional information relevant to the record such as habitat type, further details on capture, etc. Indicate if the turtle was marked prior to release here, including notching or marking means/number.

23. Reported by and date (Required)

The person completing the record report form and date that the report was completed (not the observation date unless they are the same).

Important Issues Relevant to Field Records**Specimens**

Due to the heavy exploitation facing all species of Asian turtles, field biologists are urged not to take turtles as specimens during biological surveys in order to help preserve remaining wild populations. In most cases, proper identification can be made and reliably confirmed using photographs.

Blood-work and tissue samples

It is strongly recommended where the skills and necessary supplies are present, that blood and tissue samples be taken from any turtle species encountered in the wild, as few samples are available from actual wild-caught specimens of most species native to the region, and there is a growing interest by scientists in genetic mapping of Asian turtle species. More information reference to the names and contact details of scientists working with specific species can be obtained through the ATCN.

Where to Send Field Record Reports:

Asian Turtle Conservation Network
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PO Box 222
Hanoi, Vietnam

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