

# HOW TO BUILD A TURTLE PROTECTOR DURING NESTING SEASON

Turtle nests make easy targets for natural predators. As a result many nests are lost each year contributing to declines in turtle populations. Help protect turtle eggs by building a nest protector!

Nesting Season: May – June








## WHAT YOU'LL NEED

### MATERIALS

- One (1) 2x4x8 board
- Hardware mesh (preferably ¼ inch holes)
- Eight (8) wood screws (2 ½ inch)
- Staples or U-shaped hardware tacks
- Four (4) or more garden spikes (8 inch)

### TOOLS

-  Saw
-  Electric Drill
-  Hammer or staple gun
-  Screwdriver
-  Tin or wire snips

## CONSTRUCTION STEPS

- 1) Cut the 2x4x8 board into four 2-foot lengths.
- 2) Cut a notch in the middle of two pieces, approximately 2 inches wide and 1 inch high. (Figure 1) These will be exit holes.

figure 1



figure 2



- 3) Select one notched piece and one without. Drill holes in both ends and screw pieces together.
- 4) Repeat with the remaining two pieces. This will result in two 90° angle pieces.
- 5) Drill two holes at the ends of both pieces and screw them together into a square. Make sure that the notches of both pieces are on the bottom of the finished square. (Figure 2)

- 6) Cut the hardware mesh with tin snips so that mesh is larger than the opening of the frame.
- 7) Attach mesh to wooden frame using staples or u-shaped hardware tacks every 4-6 inches (Figure 3). Make sure mesh is tight to the frame so nest predators cannot get a paw in between the frame and the mesh.

figure 3



# INSTALLATION TIPS



1

Late May to June is nesting season. Watch for turtles nesting in early morning or evening.

Do not disturb a nesting turtle. A female turtle may abandon the nest if disturbed.



2



3

Install the nest protector once the turtle has left. Centre the protector over the nest.

Hammer spikes in the four corners to secure protector in place. Make sure the spikes do not hit the nest.



4



5

Ensure that the nest protector does not block natural sun or rain. Do not cover.

Do not use nest protector along road shoulders, as it could interfere with regular road maintenance.



6



7

Install a safety flag if your nest protector is being used along driveways or paths.

Leave protector in place until late October. Most nests hatch late August to early October. If the nest you're protecting is from a Painted Turtle, keep the nest protector up through the next spring.



8



9

Scattered shells are a sign of a nest that has been attacked. A nest that has hatched successfully will usually have a small exit burrow up to the surface. In a cold summer, some nests may not hatch.

