

A Fish Spearfishing Decoy in the Likeness of a Blanding's Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*)

A request for information on turtle decoys recently appeared in this journal (Honegger, 1998). I report here a wooden decoy that was apparently modeled after a Blanding's turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*). The turtle decoy is included in a display of fish spearfishing decoys at the National Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame in Hayward, Wisconsin, where I first observed it in 1997. Fish spearfishing decoys are used to lure northern pike or other fish into the vicinity of the spearer, who typically spears in the winter through a hole in the ice (Apfelbaum et al., 1990). Decoys are most often carved in the form of fish, although Apfelbaum et al. (1990) included photographs of decoys carved as frogs, and some frogs are included in the display at Hayward.

The turtle decoy (Fig. 1) is readily identifiable from its yellow chin and smooth, high-domed, spotted carapace as a



Figure 1. A spearfishing decoy in the likeness of a Blanding's turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*).

Blanding's turtle. I was unable to measure the decoy, but it appeared to be the size of a large juvenile or subadult. I have obtained only limited information about the provenance of the turtle decoy. It was carved by folk artist John Peer of Townville, Pennsylvania, and donated to the Fishing Hall of Fame by the late Robert Jachowicz of Greendale, Wisconsin. Townville is located in northwestern Pennsylvania near the edge of the Blanding's turtle's range along Lake Erie (Ernst et al., 1994). It is perhaps of significance that Townville is less than 70 km from Lake Chautauqua in New York,

where many fish decoys were produced prior to the ban of spearfishing in the early 1900s (Apfelbaum et al., 1990).

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Literature Cited

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- ERNST, C.H., LOVICH, J.E., AND BARBOUR, R.W. 1994. Turtles of the United States and Canada. Washington: Smithsonian Inst. Press, 578 pp.
- HONEGGER, R.E. 1998. Turtle decoys – a request for information. *Chelonian Conservation and Biology* 3(1):151-152.

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A New Outlet for Chelonian Newsnotes and Announcements: Turtle and Tortoise Newsletter

In conjunction with this issue of *Chelonian Conservation and Biology* (CCB) we are changing the way we will handle Newsnotes and Announcements. In the future, these types of submissions will be published primarily in our new quarterly *Turtle and Tortoise Newsletter* (TTN). A hardcopy of TTN will be sent separately and free of charge to all CCB subscribers, and it will also be available as a free downloadable document on our website (www.chelonian.org). Also receiving TTN will be subscribers to the former *Box Turtle Research and Conservation Newsletter*, which has been merged into TTN. All members of the IUCN/SSC Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group and the AZA Chelonian Advisory Group will also receive TTN. TTN is edited by Heather Kalb and Allen Salzberg and items of interest should be sent directly to one of them.

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