

# Turtle Nest Protector Installation Tips

The turtle nesting season is from ~ **mid-May to mid-July** (depending on weather). This is when you can protect turtle nests from predators: raccoons, otters, foxes, skunks, dogs, crows, etc..

After the female turtle has left, you can protect nests **on private property** as follows:

1. Centre the nesting site under the nest protector (look for damp soil)
2. Hammer one metal spike into each inside corner of the protector, making sure the spikes do not go into the turtle nest
3. Ensure the nest protector does not block sun or rain and all exit holes are clear (i.e. do not place anything on top of the nest protector)
4. Install a safety flag beside the protector if near a driveway/path
5. Leave the nest protector in place until the hatchlings emerge - this could be in the autumn (August - October) or the following spring (~May)

## Why protect turtle nests?

Turtle nests are regularly destroyed by predators. In fact, **less than 1% of eggs survive to maturity**. Turtle nests near human populations are particularly at risk as predators are more abundant in these areas. By installing a nest protector you can help more eggs survive!

Thank you for being  
a Turtle Warrior



Turtles Kingston



Scan the code with your  
phone camera to participate!

Continue participating  
in the Turtles Kingston  
Nest Protection Program  
by **sharing data** about  
your protected nests!

# Important Facts about Protecting Turtle Nests

- Turtles typically nest in the early **morning or evening** when temperatures are lower, especially after a rain.
- It is **illegal** to dig up or disturb a turtle nest.
- Turtle eggs will **hatch in 60-90 days** but may not emerge until later. Northern Map and Midland Painted turtles like to **overwinter** in the nest – meaning they will hatch in the autumn but not emerge until the following spring.
- A **successfully hatched and emerged** nest will have a small hole in the soil. If you see egg shells that is a sign the nest has been predated.
- Turtles often **return** to the same nesting site each year, thus you can help generations of turtles if you annually protect nests.
- Protecting a turtle nest **as soon as possible** will ensure it is not predated. Predators are attracted to the smell a female leaves behind after the eggs are laid.
- Turtle hatchlings make **little noises** as they develop. These noises attract predators, which is why we protect the nest through the entire incubation period / nesting season.
- Never disturb a nesting turtle as she may abandon the nesting process, putting her at risk of death. Be sure to **watch from at least 10 m away**. You can approach briefly to ensure you know where the nest was actually laid (we recommend taking a photo for reference).
- If predators are trying to lift the nest protector, you can carefully place **bricks or rocks** on the corners, being sure not to block any sun.
- If you find a turtle hatchling you can help it to the nearest wetland. Place them on the water's edge, **never in the water**.



Protecting Nests on Public Property? Learn more on our website  
[www.turtleskingston.com/nest-protection-program](http://www.turtleskingston.com/nest-protection-program)