

Indian Softshell Turtle

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Indian Softshell Turtle Latest News

Recently, during a routine check police rescued 16 Indian Softshell turtles in Greater Noida.

About Indian Softshell Turtle

- Indian softshell turtles (*Nilssonia gangetica*) are one of **the largest freshwater turtle** species in the world.
- It is also known as the **Ganges Softshell turtle**.
- **Appearance**
 - It has **carapace** (upper shell), which is round to oval shaped, and green in colour with a yellow border.
 - It has a long **neck and tube-like snouts** help them to extend their nose out of the water to breathe.
 - The compressed shell, on the other hand, streamlines them, thereby **making them brilliant and fast swimmers**.
- **Habitat:** These turtles inhabit deep rivers, streams, canals, lakes and ponds, typically preferring areas with sandy or muddy bottoms.
- They thrive in **turbid water** and spend most of their time hidden under the sand.

- **Geographical Distribution:** They are found in Afghanistan, **India, Bangladesh** and Pakistan.
- Mainly found in **Indus, Ganges, Meghna, Brahmaputra, Yamuna, Narmada and Mahanandi river basins.**
- **Diet:** Indian softshell **turtles are omnivorous**, feeding on fish, amphibians, mollusks, insects, carrion and aquatic plants.
- These turtles **breed from February to April.**
- These are often maintained in **the temple ponds of Orissa** where they **are considered sacred.**
- **Threat:** Habitat alteration and destruction, Poaching and illegal trading for traditional medicines, expansion of agriculture, commercial exploitation.
- **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN Red List:** Endangered
 - **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972:** Schedule I

Source: IE

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