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Geographical range

Species of the Day: Myanmar River Turtle

The **Myanmar River Turtle**, *Batagur trivittata*, is listed as 'Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™, but recent analysis suggests that it is now 'Critically Endangered'. Females reach 58 cm in shell length, and mature males develop a spectacular breeding-season colouration, becoming silvery white with black stripes on the shell, with a black face mask over a lime-green head.

Historically, this species occurred throughout the large rivers of Myanmar, with 19th century naturalists reporting huge nesting congregations of basking animals on the delta islands. Intensive egg collection at these predictable sites, capture of adults for consumption, and habitat degradation combined to decimate its populations in the 20th century. Until a few remnant animals were recently found in remote upper tributaries, the status of the species remained uncertain.

Intensive efforts are now underway to work with locals to protect the last known nesting beach, raise juveniles in a safe captive environment for re-introduction, and survey other remote waterways.

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