

**OVERWINTERING IN HATCHLING TURTLES:
SOME THEY DO, AND SOME THEY DON'T, AND SOME YOU JUST CAN'T
TELL**

Whit Gibbons

Overwintering, a.k.a. delayed emergence from the nest, is a global phenomenon among Temperate Zone turtles and occurs in the majority of families of freshwater and terrestrial turtles. Although most species can be categorized as having either autumn emergence from the nest or delayed emergence that occurs in the spring, exceptions occur within each group. The ecological and evolutionary significance of fall vs. spring emergence within and among six species of southeastern turtles will be addressed based on four decades of samples of more than 2800 wild-caught hatchlings of six species (>900 yellow-bellied sliders, *Trachemys scripta*; >800 eastern mud turtles, *Kinosternon subrubrum*; >600 chicken turtles, *Deirochelys reticularia*; >300 Florida cooters, *Pseudemys floridana*; >200 snappers, *Chelydra serpentina*; >70 common musk turtles, *Sternotherus odoratus*).