

## **Methods for characterization of freshwater turtle nesting beaches in an urban environment**

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Highly urbanized centres create unique challenges not only for turtle populations but also for those who wish to study them. This study focuses on nest-beach characterization within the Greater Toronto Area, with a focus on the Rouge River Watershed. Turtle habitat in the region is minimal, with populations isolated in small undeveloped pockets. Creating artificial nest-beaches may provide added habitat, or at the very least increase the search areas for predators in a region with inflated predator populations. This study aims to determine characteristics of known nest-beaches in the region and make recommendations regarding which factors are vital for nest-beach construction for these turtle populations. The methods for nest beach characterization will be discussed, as well as some of the challenges of working in an urban environment.