

# *Herpetological Review*

***CHELYDRA SERPENTINA*** (Common Snapping Turtle). **SURVIVAL AFTER INJURY**

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**CHELYDRA SERPENTINA** (Common Snapping Turtle). **SURVIVAL AFTER INJURY.** We here report an adult *Chelydra serpentina* from Wethersfield Cove, Wethersfield, Connecticut, USA, missing most of its lower jaw (Fig. 1). This old injury to the jaw would presumably disable both the suction-feeding apparatus (by reducing flow speed during strike and increasing backflow during buccopharyngeal compression) described for this species (Lauder and Prendergast 1992. *J. Exp. Biol.* 164:55–78) and eliminate bite force (Herrel et al. 2002. *J. Evol. Biol.* 15:1083). Yet this turtle weighed 17.5 kg and had a carapace length of 44.5 cm; visual examination showed ample fat deposits indicating that this turtle was in good condition despite its injury. The turtle was apparently able to heal and grow after the loss of the lower jaw, thus compensating for the lack of normal biting and prey-handling behaviors.



FIG. 1. Male Common Snapping Turtle missing most of its lower jaw, Wethersfield Cove, Hartford, Connecticut, USA (44.5 cm carapace length, 17.5 kg). This animal apparently healed and grew without being able to suction feed or produce bite force.

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