
Mount (op. cit.) mapped numerous records for the species in Alabama, but none for an 18-county area in the central part of the state, including all six counties contiguous with Bibb Co., hence the new record occurs in the center of the large area of the range he depicted as unoccupied in his range map for the species. The new record calls into question the large range gap shown for the species in central Alabama by Mount and subsequent sources (e.g., Conant and Collins 1991. A Field Guide to Reptile & Amphibians: Eastern and Central North America, 3rd ed. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, Massachusetts. 616 pp.; Ernst and Lovich 2009. Turtles of the United States and Canada, 2nd ed. Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, Baltimore, Maryland. 827 pp.).

The new locality and others that may yet be discovered in the central region of Alabama may be vitally important for resolving the question of whether or not the taxon *dorsalis* should be regarded as a separate species or a subspecies of *C. picta*. Ernst (1967. Copeia 1967:131–136) analyzed morphological variation from Arkansas and Louisiana to Georgia and concluded that nearly half of the Alabama specimens he examined were intergrades of two subspecies, *C. p. picta* from the east and *C. p. dorsalis* from the west. Mount considered the region of Alabama east of the Coosa River, beginning ca. 67 km E of the new Bibb Co. record, to be an area of intergradation of the subspecies *C. p. picta* from the east, *C. p. marginata* from the north, and *C. p. dorsalis* from the west (see also Conant and Collins, op. cit.). On the basis of mtDNA sequences, Starkey et al. (2003. Evolution 57:119–128.) concluded that *dorsalis* warranted separate species status; two specimens from one site in northern Alabama were sampled and were grouped in a *dorsalis* clade that was strongly supported as sister to a clade of all other *C. picta*. Their conclusion has not been universally accepted (e.g., Ernst and Lovich, op. cit.; Fritz and Havaš 2007. Vert. Zool. 57:149–368; Rhodin et al. 2010. Chelon. Rev. Monogr. 5:000.85–000.164). The two photos of the Bibb Co. specimen show characters consistent with *C. p. dorsalis* lack of a dark plastral pattern, a wide reddish-orange dorsal stripe, and relatively strong misalignment of the costal and vertebral scute margins (Ulkisch et al. 2001. Can. J. Zool. 79:485–498). Genetic sampling and morphological analysis of painted turtles from central Alabama would be of strong interest in resolving the taxonomic status of painted turtles in the southern United States.

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