



Keeping Cool Data Sheet

NAME: _____ DATE: _____
TIMES: start _____ end _____ SPECIES: _____

WEATHER:

Location one:

Description of site:

Temperature:

What habitat components are found at this site?

Location two:

Description of site:

Temperature:

What habitat components are found at this site?

Location three:

Description of site:

Temperature:

What habitat components are found at this site?

Why would this site be suitable for your species?

Notes to Teachers / Facilitators

From JD – VDGIF Herpetologist

wood turtles and cottonmouths, are quite cold tolerant. I've seen wood turtles attempting to mate under ice in December and cottonmouths out basking on a sunny day in February. There's even video of a mudsnake crawling across a frozen Nottoway River from a few years ago. Some species may not bask at all, but crawl under a rock that is exposed to the sun to warm themselves. Turtles bask more in the spring, but as water temps rise they don't bask as much. As for lizards, Six-lined Race Runners have the highest temperature tolerance of Virginia's lizards and are also the latest to emerge and first to go under. Its highly variable, seasonal, species specific, and possibly geographically variable between populations. But as you pointed out, there are lethal thresholds. Basking ecology is a science in and of itself. Gravid females also bask a lot more than males and non-gravid females. Each species has its optimal temperature for whatever physiological system (locomotion, gestation, digestion or reproduction).

From the Project WILD coordinator:

The information on the web consistently mentions that the range for reptiles is between 40-90 F. Most of this is found on the pet trade pages. I have not been able to locate specific information for VA Species. Since reptiles are ectothermic and the range varies with species.

NOTE:

For the first journal in this file use the instructions for creating a folding journal - a separate document in this folder.