

Nature Notes

For the
week of
December
8- 14

From your friends at Saint John's Arboretum!

The Painted Turtle's Hibernation Habits



Photo courtesy of: Saint John's Arboretum

If *Chrysemys picta* can't simply hide in her shell during winter, then where does she go?

Jokes...so bad they're funny!

- Q: Why didn't the dog speak to his foot?

A: Because it's not polite to talk back to your paw!

- Q: Why are maps like fish?

A: They both have scales!

- Although some turtles are seen swimming beneath the ice, most remain dormant during the winter months.
- The turtle has a unique strategy for winter survival: she will burrow deep in the mud at the bottom of a pond, remaining there for several months!
- During this time beneath the "anoxic" mud, the turtle's need for oxygen decreases. By way of their skin and throat, the turtle is able to absorb enough oxygen from the water to survive.
- Because of this low oxygen intake, the painted turtle must slow down all of its metabolic processes by about 90%!
- Although many other amphibians use this same process, the turtle can do so for extended periods of time.
- Turtle hatchlings can survive being frozen through a process called "super cooling," but this can lead to an unwanted increase in the turtle population due to high survival rates.

Sources:

- <http://www.tortoise.org/archives/chrysemy.html>
- <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2290531/>

Upcoming Arboretum Events

OLC Winter Gear has arrived!

Roller Disco with the PRPs

Wednesday, December 8th, 8:00—10:30pm

Old Gym (Guild Hall), SJU

Roller skates provided but feel free to bring your own! There will be a costume contest, disco dance-off, snow cones and popcorn! Bring your friends for some radical, flash-back fun!

If you would like to be on the volunteer e-mail list for the Arboretum, please e-mail your name and graduation year to: arboretum@csbsju.edu.

We'll be in touch...

Your friends at the Arboretum

It's your backyard, so get out and play!

***Nature Notes is a weekly publication designed to keep you informed about exciting events offered by the Arboretum!

Saint John's Arboretum
104 New Science Building
Collegeville, MN 56321-2000
320.363.3136

www.csbsju.edu/arboretum