

VETO MESSAGE:

No

GOVERNOR'S PRESS RELEASE ON SIGNING:

Yes

FOLLOWING WERE PRINTED:

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REPORTS:

HEARINGS:

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES:

Yes

"Bill to name bog turtle New Jersey state reptile signed," Associated Press State Wire: New Jersey, 6-18-2018

"Meet N.J.'s official state reptile," The Star-Ledger, 6-19-2018

"A slow and steady lesson - New Jersey names state reptile as students learn how laws are made," The Star-Ledger, 6-19-2018

"Bog turtle becomes New Jersey's state reptile," Associated Press State Wire: New Jersey, 6-19-2018

"Long live NJ's New State Reptile: The Bog Turtle," The Record, 6-20-2018

"Endangered bog turtle becomes N.J. state reptile - Endangered bog turtle now state reptile," The Press of Atlantic City, 6-20-2018

"Bog turtle becomes New Jersey's state reptile," The Advertiser-News, 6-20-2018

RWH

P.L. 2018, CHAPTER 41, *approved June 18, 2018*
Senate, No. 1925

1 **AN ACT** designating the Bog Turtle as the New Jersey State Reptile,
2 and supplementing chapter 9A of Title 52 of the Revised
3 Statutes.
4
5 **WHEREAS**, The Bog Turtle is a small turtle with a distinct orange
6 patch on either side of its head and a brown to black shell; and
7 **WHEREAS**, The Bog Turtle is one of the smallest turtles in the world
8 and one of the rarest in North America; and
9 **WHEREAS**, The Bog Turtle can be found in 12 New Jersey counties
10 and formerly populated all but three of New Jersey's counties; and
11 **WHEREAS**, The Bog Turtle inhabits shallow spring-fed fens, bogs,
12 swamps, marshy meadows, and wet pastures, where it spends
13 most of its time submerged in mud; and
14 **WHEREAS**, The Bog Turtle consumes a varied diet including insects,
15 snails, worms, seeds, and carrion; and
16 **WHEREAS**, The Bog Turtle depends on a natural habitat that has a
17 diverse array of open fields and shrubbery for foraging, nesting,
18 basking, and hibernating; and
19 **WHEREAS**, The Bog Turtle generally hibernates from mid-
20 September through mid-April, and is easiest to find in mid-April
21 through June when it suns itself on matted vegetation; and
22 **WHEREAS**, The State of New Jersey listed the Bog Turtle as an
23 endangered species in 1974 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
24 listed the Bog Turtle as a threatened species in 1997; and
25 **WHEREAS**, The New Jersey field office of the U.S. Fish and
26 Wildlife Service partners with environmental community groups
27 and private landowners to maintain and expand the Bog Turtle's
28 habitat; and
29 **WHEREAS**, The State of New Jersey's Endangered and Nongame
30 Species Program through the Department of Environmental
31 Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife also works with private
32 landowners and environmental organizations to identify Bog Turtle
33 habitats, manage land where Bog Turtles are found, and educate
34 landowners about federal cost-sharing programs which help finance
35 preservation efforts; and
36 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey's history of agriculture has benefitted the Bog
37 Turtle as grazing animals help maintain the open-canopy
38 herbaceous wetlands, which Bog Turtles prefer, by controlling
39 woody shrubs and invasive species, and current preservation efforts
40 involve allowing farm animals to graze in Bog Turtle habitats; and
41 **WHEREAS**, A majority of states across the country have designated an
42 official state reptile to accompany their state symbols, but New
43 Jersey has not done so; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Designating the Bog Turtle as the State Reptile will
2 increase the public profile of the Bog Turtle, and encourage the
3 conservation of the species and its habitat; and

4 **WHEREAS**, Due to the uniqueness of the Bog Turtle, it is appropriate
5 and fitting that the Bog Turtle be granted special recognition, and
6 the Bog Turtle is a fitting and proper addition to New Jersey's other
7 State Symbols; and

8 **WHEREAS**, By designating the Bog Turtle as the State Reptile, the
9 State government recognizes the importance of the Bog Turtle and
10 the unique ecosystems in this State that can support such a rare
11 creature; now, therefore,

12

13 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
14 *of New Jersey:*

15

16 1. The Bog Turtle (*Glyptemys muhlenbergii*) is designated as
17 the New Jersey State Reptile.

18

19 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

20

21

22

STATEMENT

23

24 This bill designates the Bog Turtle as the official State Reptile of
25 New Jersey. This small, black and brown turtle with bright
26 markings on its head lives in 12 of New Jersey's counties and
27 formerly could be found in all but three counties. The Bog Turtle is
28 the smallest and one of the rarest turtles in North America, and is
29 thus an important and unique feature of New Jersey's ecosystem
30 that should be recognized and preserved. The U.S. Department of
31 Fish and Wildlife and the New Jersey Department of Environmental
32 Protection both recognize the importance of the Bog Turtle and
33 partner with private landowners to preserve its habitats. In some
34 instances, land owners can even use existing livestock to help
35 manage Bog Turtle sites, as grazing animals can remove invasive
36 species and eradicate plants that encroach upon the Bog Turtle's
37 preferred environment. A majority of other states have designated a
38 state reptile, and promoting the Bog Turtle will encourage
39 awareness of this creature and the preservation of its natural habitat.

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44 _____
Designates Bog Turtle as State Reptile.

SENATE, No. 1925

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 22, 2018

Sponsored by:

Senator CHRISTOPHER "KIP" BATEMAN

District 16 (Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset)

Assemblyman ANDREW ZWICKER

District 16 (Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset)

Assemblywoman CAROL A. MURPHY

District 7 (Burlington)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Freiman

SYNOPSIS

Designates Bog Turtle as State Reptile.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/25/2018)

S1925 BATEMAN

2

- 1 **AN ACT** designating the Bog Turtle as the New Jersey State Reptile,
2 and supplementing chapter 9A of Title 52 of the Revised
3 Statutes.
- 4
- 5 **WHEREAS**, The Bog Turtle is a small turtle with a distinct orange
6 patch on either side of its head and a brown to black shell; and
- 7 **WHEREAS**, The Bog Turtle is one of the smallest turtles in the world
8 and one of the rarest in North America; and
- 9 **WHEREAS**, The Bog Turtle can be found in 12 New Jersey counties
10 and formerly populated all but three of New Jersey's counties; and
- 11 **WHEREAS**, The Bog Turtle inhabits shallow spring-fed fens, bogs,
12 swamps, marshy meadows, and wet pastures, where it spends
13 most of its time submerged in mud; and
- 14 **WHEREAS**, The Bog Turtle consumes a varied diet including insects,
15 snails, worms, seeds, and carrion; and
- 16 **WHEREAS**, The Bog Turtle depends on a natural habitat that has a
17 diverse array of open fields and shrubbery for foraging, nesting,
18 basking, and hibernating; and
- 19 **WHEREAS**, The Bog Turtle generally hibernates from mid-
20 September through mid-April, and is easiest to find in mid-April
21 through June when it suns itself on matted vegetation; and
- 22 **WHEREAS**, The State of New Jersey listed the Bog Turtle as an
23 endangered species in 1974 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
24 listed the Bog Turtle as a threatened species in 1997; and
- 25 **WHEREAS**, The New Jersey field office of the U.S. Fish and
26 Wildlife Service partners with environmental community groups
27 and private landowners to maintain and expand the Bog Turtle's
28 habitat; and
- 29 **WHEREAS**, The State of New Jersey's Endangered and Nongame
30 Species Program through the Department of Environmental
31 Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife also works with private
32 landowners and environmental organizations to identify Bog Turtle
33 habitats, manage land where Bog Turtles are found, and educate
34 landowners about federal cost-sharing programs which help finance
35 preservation efforts; and
- 36 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey's history of agriculture has benefitted the Bog
37 Turtle as grazing animals help maintain the open-canopy
38 herbaceous wetlands, which Bog Turtles prefer, by controlling
39 woody shrubs and invasive species, and current preservation efforts
40 involve allowing farm animals to graze in Bog Turtle habitats; and
- 41 **WHEREAS**, A majority of states across the country have designated an
42 official state reptile to accompany their state symbols, but New
43 Jersey has not done so; and
- 44 **WHEREAS**, Designating the Bog Turtle as the State Reptile will
45 increase the public profile of the Bog Turtle, and encourage the
46 conservation of the species and its habitat; and
- 47 **WHEREAS**, Due to the uniqueness of the Bog Turtle, it is appropriate
48 and fitting that the Bog Turtle be granted special recognition, and

S1925 BATEMAN

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1 the Bog Turtle is a fitting and proper addition to New Jersey's other
2 State Symbols; and

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4 State government recognizes the importance of the Bog Turtle and
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6 creature; now, therefore,

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8 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
9 *of New Jersey:*

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12 the New Jersey State Reptile.

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14 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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19 This bill designates the Bog Turtle as the official State Reptile of
20 New Jersey. This small, black and brown turtle with bright
21 markings on its head lives in 12 of New Jersey's counties and
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23 the smallest and one of the rarest turtles in North America, and is
24 thus an important and unique feature of New Jersey's ecosystem
25 that should be recognized and preserved. The U.S. Department of
26 Fish and Wildlife and the New Jersey Department of Environmental
27 Protection both recognize the importance of the Bog Turtle and
28 partner with private landowners to preserve its habitats. In some
29 instances, land owners can even use existing livestock to help
30 manage Bog Turtle sites, as grazing animals can remove invasive
31 species and eradicate plants that encroach upon the Bog Turtle's
32 preferred environment. A majority of other states have designated a
33 state reptile, and promoting the Bog Turtle will encourage
34 awareness of this creature and the preservation of its natural habitat.

SENATE STATE GOVERNMENT, WAGERING, TOURISM &
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1925

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 26, 2018

The Senate State Government, Wagering, Tourism and Historic Preservation Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1925.

This bill designates the Bog Turtle as the official State Reptile of New Jersey. This small, black and brown turtle with bright markings on its head lives in 12 of New Jersey's counties and formerly could be found in all but three counties. The Bog Turtle is the smallest and one of the rarest turtles in North America, and is thus an important and unique feature of New Jersey's ecosystem that should be recognized and preserved. The U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection both recognize the importance of the Bog Turtle and partner with private landowners to preserve its habitats. In some instances, land owners can even use existing livestock to help manage Bog Turtle sites, as grazing animals can remove invasive species and eradicate plants that encroach upon the Bog Turtle's preferred environment. A majority of other states have designated a state reptile, and promoting the Bog Turtle will encourage awareness of this creature and the preservation of its natural habitat.

ASSEMBLY ENVIRONMENT AND SOLID WASTE
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1925

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 10, 2018

The Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1925.

This bill designates the Bog Turtle as the official State Reptile of New Jersey. This small, black and brown turtle with bright markings on its head lives in 12 of New Jersey's counties and formerly could be found in all but three counties. The Bog Turtle is the smallest and one of the rarest turtles in North America, and is thus an important and unique feature of New Jersey's ecosystem that should be recognized and preserved. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection both recognize the importance of the Bog Turtle and partner with private landowners to preserve its habitats. A majority of other states have designated a state reptile, and promoting the Bog Turtle will encourage awareness of this creature and the preservation of its natural habitat.

As reported by the committee, this bill is identical to Assembly Bill No. 1530 as also reported by the committee.

ASSEMBLY, No. 1530

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 218th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2018 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman ANDREW ZWICKER

District 16 (Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset)

SYNOPSIS

Designates Bog Turtle as State Reptile.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



A1530 ZWICKER

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36 awareness of this creature and the preservation of its natural habitat.

ASSEMBLY ENVIRONMENT AND SOLID WASTE
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 1530

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 10, 2018

The Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 1530.

This bill designates the Bog Turtle as the official State Reptile of New Jersey. This small, black and brown turtle with bright markings on its head lives in 12 of New Jersey's counties and formerly could be found in all but three counties. The Bog Turtle is the smallest and one of the rarest turtles in North America, and is thus an important and unique feature of New Jersey's ecosystem that should be recognized and preserved. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection both recognize the importance of the Bog Turtle and partner with private landowners to preserve its habitats. A majority of other states have designated a state reptile, and promoting the Bog Turtle will encourage awareness of this creature and the preservation of its natural habitat.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2018-2019 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

As reported by the committee, this bill is identical to Senate Bill No. 1925 as also reported by the committee.

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Newark, N.J.

Governor Phil Murphy Designates Bog Turtle as State Reptile

06/18/2018

TRENTON – Today, Governor Murphy, joined by students at Riverside Elementary School, Senator Kip Bateman, and Assemblyman Andrew Zwicker, signed legislation S1925 (Bateman/Zwicker, Murphy, Freiman) into law to designate the Bog Turtle as New Jersey’s State Reptile. Two years ago, Mark Eastburn, science teacher at Riverside Elementary school, told his students that New Jersey did not have a state reptile. The students decided to take action and advocate for the endangered bog turtle to become New Jersey’s state reptile. They hope this designation will increase awareness to restore the habitat and help the species thrive.

“I commend New Jersey’s young students, teachers and scientists for working hard to protect our critically endangered bog turtles and our environment,” **said Governor Murphy**. “I could not be more excited to sign a bill officially making the bog turtle New Jersey’s state reptile. This bill shows that when we work together, we can accomplish some pretty great things.”

“We have been told that there are very few bills in the New Jersey Legislature that could ever pass a unanimous vote and we are very grateful that Democrats and Republicans can come together and support this effort,” **said Jeremy Wachtell, fifth-grade student at Riverside Elementary School**.

“We are so thankful that you have responded to our letters and we are also so grateful that you, along with Senator Bateman and Assemblyman Zwicker, have shown us that every person in New Jersey has a voice as long as we are not afraid to speak up,” **said Jamie Acevedo, fifth-grade student at Riverside Elementary School**.

“It shows that you can work together - Republicans and Democrats and Bog Turtles are not partisan - they are bipartisan.” He continued to tell the students, “Doing what we’re doing here today is really because of your actions and your teacher’s actions. The teachers here are going to be able to save a very valuable resource so you should be really proud of yourself,” **said Senator Kip Bateman**.

“I am so thrilled to be here and have the Governor here to sign this bill for all of the work you did and I just want to say slow and steady wins the race,” **said Assemblyman Andrew Zwicker**.

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