

# Wildlife Epidemiology Laboratory

University of Illinois-College of Veterinary Medicine  
Open House 2021



# What do we do?



- Offer research and training opportunities for veterinarians and veterinary students
  - Fieldwork and data collection
    - Turtle Teams
      - Illinois and Massachusetts
    - Blanding's Teams
    - Dragon Team
  - Hands on experience with our in-lab reptile species
- Educate our students and community about the importance of wildlife health and diseases
- Collaborate with other researchers, organizations and institutions.
- Perform diagnostic testing for zoos and other institutions

# Species of interest?

## TURTLES



**Blanding's turtles**  
(*Emydoidea blandingii*)



**Eastern and Ornate box turtles**  
EBT- (*Terrapene carolina carolina*)  
OBT- (*Terrapene ornata ornata*)



**Alligator snapping turtles**  
(*Macrochelys temminckii*)





# Snakes



**Lake Erie watersnakes**  
(*Nerodia sipedon insularum*)



**Prairie rattlesnakes**  
(*Crotalus viridis*)



**Timber rattlesnakes**  
(*Crotalus horridus*)



**Eastern massasauga**  
(*Sistrurus catenatus*)

**Bearded dragons**  
(*Pogona vitticeps*)





# Summer Research

## What do we do?

- We travel to multiple locations in Illinois and Tennessee.
- Catch, sample and release Eastern and Ornate box turtles.
- Assess population health and contribute to species conservation.



# Turtle Team



## How do we do it?

- We get help from John Rucker and his Boykin Spaniels - known as the turtle dogs.
- Volunteer veterinary students (20-30) join us for a few weeks as well.

# Summer Research

## What do we do?

- Stayed on Camp Edwards Joint Military Base and worked with their wildlife biologists.
- Catch, sample and release Eastern box turtles, painted turtles and spotted turtles.
- Assess population health and contribute to species conservation.



# Cape Cod, MA



## How do we do it?

- Use hoop traps to sample painted and spotted turtles.
- Track turtles via radiotelemetry



# Summer Research



# Blanding's Teams

## What do we do?

- Spend the summer in the swamps of northern Illinois.
- Catch, sample and release Blanding's turtles, painted turtles, and snapping turtles.
- Assess population health and contribute to species conservation.

## How do we do it?

- Use hoop traps to catch turtles and check them every day.
- Track turtles using radio radiotelemetry.



# Summer Research

## What do we do?

- Perform daily husbandry, care and treatment of our bearded dragon colony
- Facilitate hands-on teaching and learning opportunities for veterinary students interested in reptile medicine.

## How do we do it?

- Design research projects pertaining to reptile treatment and diagnostics.
- Acquire grants and additional funding to continue our leadership in reptile medicine

# Dragon Team



# Snake Team/Diagnostic Testing

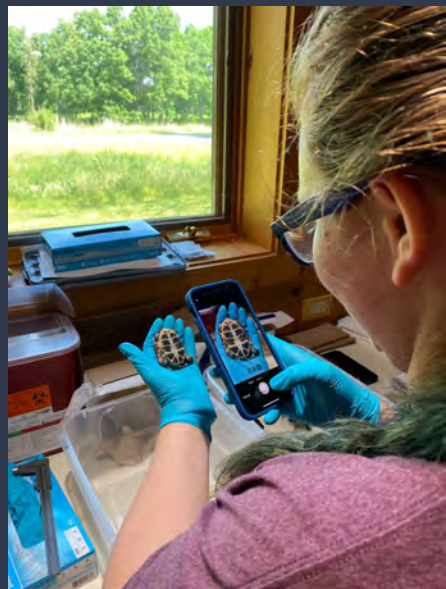
## What do we do?

- Investigate outbreaks of SFD in wild snake populations.
- Collaborate with zoos and other organizations to further improve the understanding of SFD.



## How do we do it?

- Perform DNA extractions to measure SFD levels.
- Capture, swab and release individuals to track the epidemiology of SFD
- Investigate new modalities of treatment and diagnostics



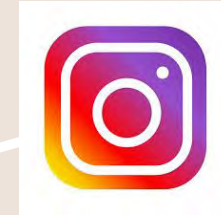




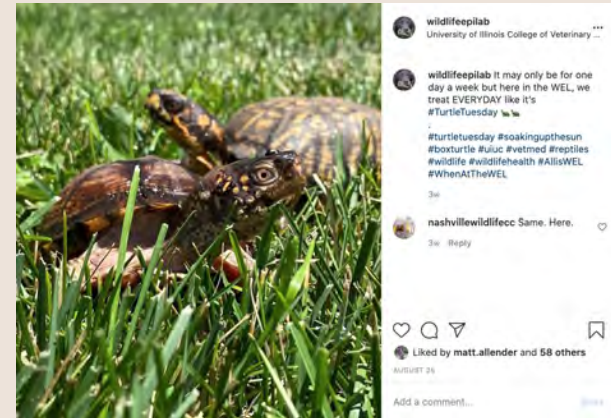
# Follow our Adventures and Discoveries on our Social Media Pages!



Twitter:  
[@WildlifeEpiLab](#)



Instagram:  
[@wildlifeepilab](#)



# Want to learn more about what we do???

Visit our website –  
<https://vetmed.illinois.edu/wel/>

- Scroll to the bottom and check out our student blogs about summer fieldwork
- Click the “People” link to meet our incredible team of veterinarians and veterinary students in the lab!
- Find additional links for diseases, collaboration, publications and more!

