



Outdoor Classroom Project Plan: Materials List & Budget for Box Turtle Habitat

Note: This outdoor learning station must be pre-approved by the Alabama Wildlife Federation and the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) before it is built. If approved, ADCNR will provide a permit for the school to have two non-breeding box turtles for educational purposes.

An Eastern box turtle habitat is an enclosed habitat that provides water, food, cover, and an area for hibernation during winter months. In the wild, these turtles spend their time in woodland areas traversing the forest floor. They spend time basking in sunny areas, but they prefer shady, well-vegetated areas over all. They are omnivorous, eating everything from flowers and fungus to slugs and salamanders. Because the turtles are in an enclosure, the school is responsible for providing a balanced, nutritional diet for the turtles.

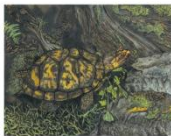
❖ Habitat Requirements:

- Two separate feeding areas (flat rocks) to minimize for food
- Basking area (such as a large flat rock) in full sun where turtles can warm their bodies
- A pond with drinkable water (that is cleaned by aquatic plants in the pond) that is large enough and deep enough for the turtles to completely submerge and soak their bodies AND that has some type of rocks or blocks in it as steps so the turtles can easily enter and leave the pond
- Plants such as hostas for cover and strawberry plants for supplemental food (in addition to what you feed them)
- Nesting area with sand (This is only to demonstrate to the students that turtles dig holes and lay their eggs in the ground. You should not have a pair of breeding turtles. If you have female turtles and you find eggs or baby turtles in the habitat, contact your AWF Outdoor Classroom Consultant.)
- Brumation (hibernation) area with at least three inches of loose soil and mulch (such as dead leaves) where turtles can completely burrow underground in the winter
- Small logs and rocks to create varied terrain to provide exercise for the turtles and to prevent their claws from growing too long
- A place where turtles can escape predators (such as a terracotta pot half-buried in the ground on its side)

❖ Example Box Turtle Habitat Picture & Educational Sign:




**Welcome to our
Box Turtle Habitat**



Eastern box turtles are the only native terrestrial turtle species in north Alabama. They have one of the best adaptations in the wildlife community! They can pull their heads, legs and tails into their shells for protection from predators. Also, the colors on their shells act as camouflage as they crawl along the forest floor looking for snails, bugs and plants to eat. Our habitat provides plants for shelter, water to drink and cool off in, sand where they can lay their eggs, and food that we give them.

This species is listed as "protected" in Alabama. Our school has a permit from the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to keep two box turtles for educational purposes.

Scan this QR Code to learn more about box turtles.
Enjoy nature's beauty!
Protect it from litter and vandalism!





Outdoor Classroom Project Plan: Box Turtle Habitat

❖ **Estimated Cost of Box Turtle Habitat: \$495**

❖ **Materials & Supplies with Estimated Budget:**

Box Turtle Habitat				
8 ft W x 16 ft L x 20 in H enclosure with pond, plants, shelter, and feeding stations				
Station	Materials & Supplies	Estimated Cost	Source of Materials	Final Cost
Turtle	(1) Can of Landscape Marking Spray Paint (to mark the perimeter of the enclosure, pond, etc.) @~\$9.98 ea	\$10	Lowe's Item #429750	
Turtle	(4) 2" x 10" x 16' Treated Lumber (for front & back) @~\$28.08 ea	\$115 total	Lowe's Item #312277	
Turtle	(4) 2" x 10" x 8' Treated Lumber (for sides) @~\$10.98 ea	\$45 total	Lowe's Item #312274	
Turtle	(1) 4" x 4" x 12' Treated Lumber ((6) 24" braces) @~\$18.38 ea	\$20	Lowe's Item #312626	
Turtle	(1) 1-Lb Box of 3" Ceramic Outdoor Deck Screws @~\$9.98 ea	\$10	Lowe's Item #9457	
Turtle	(1) Large Mixing Tub 24-in W x 36-in L x 8-in D Drywall Mud Pan @~\$18.28 ea	\$20	Lowe's Item #1176703	
Turtle	(1) Aquatic Plant (Horsetail, Lizard Tail, Arrow Arum, or Pickerelweed)	\$10	Nursery via OC Consultant	
Turtle	(1) 50 Lb Bags of All-purpose Sand (for under pond & "nesting area") @~\$6.28 ea	\$5	Lowe's Item #98545	
Turtle	(1) 20 lb Bag of Brown Polished Pebbles (along bottom of pond, top of potted aquatic plant) @~\$32.45 ea	\$30	Lowe's Item #1158217	
Turtle	(3) 9" x 6" x 2" Patio Stones (stack to create steps in pond) @~\$1.48 ea	\$5 total	Lowe's Item #477080	
Turtle	(5) 12-18" Flat, Rectangular Natural Landscape Rocks (for feeding stations, basking station & cave) @~\$6.18 ea	\$30 total	Lowe's Item #477064	
Turtle	(1) 24" Terracotta Pot (create "cave" for protection from predators) @~\$23.99 ea	\$25	Lowe's Item #4349176	
Turtle	(2) Hostas & (2) Evergreen Ferns (for cover)	\$40 total	Nursery via OC Consultant	
Turtle	(4) Food Source Plants (2 species, 2 individuals of each – see list below)	\$20 total	Nursery via OC Consultant	
Turtle	(2) 32-Quart (1CF) Bags of Evergreen Organic Potting Soil Mix @~\$6.38 ea	\$15 total	Lowe's Item #380608	
Turtle	(2) 2 CF Bags of Natural Dark Brown Pine Bark Mulch @~3.48 ea **do NOT get black mulch as it gets hot and kills plants**	\$5 total	Lowe's Item #92118	





Outdoor Classroom Project Plan: Example Box Turtle Habitat

❖ Materials & Supplies with Estimated Budget (cont.):

Turtle	Small logs & rocks create varied terrain to help turtles exercise & help prevent their claws from growing too long	\$0	Get Donated	
Turtle	(2) 50 Qt Bags of Leaf Litter/Mulch (for hibernation area and in "cave")	\$0	Get Donated	
Turtle	(1) Educational Sign	\$75	Ask OC Consultant about https://www.alabamawildlife.org/oc-signs/	
Turtle	(1) 6 ft. U-Post for Fence <i>(for educational sign)</i> @~\$10.69 ea	\$10	Lowe's Item #493054	
Turtle	(1) Hillman 1/4-in x 1-1/2 in Zinc-Plated Coarse Thread Hex Bolt (2-count) @~\$0.88 ea	\$5 total	Lowe's Item #137634	
Turtle	(2) Hillman 1/4-in x 20 Zinc-Plated Steel Hex Nut @~\$0.10 ea		Lowe's Item #63301	
Turtle	(2) Hillman 1/4-in Zinc-Plated Standard Flat Washer @~\$0.15 ea		Lowe's Item #63306	
Total Estimated Cost: \$495				

❖ Box Turtle Habitat Plant Suggestions:

Aquatic Plants			
Horsetail	Lizard Tail	Arrow Arum	Pickerelweed
Food Plants			
Clover	Strawberries	Lettuces/ Greens	Parsley
Alfalfa	Chickweed	Green Beans	Coreopsis

