

Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

ERNST, CARL H. 1983. *Platemys pallidipectoris*.*Platemys pallidipectoris* Freiberg
Chaco sideneck turtle

Platemys pallidipectoris Freiberg, 1945:19. Type-locality, "Poia. Roque Sáenz Peña, Chaco [Province]," Argentina. Holotype, Mus. Argentino Cienc. Natur. 1731, alcoholic female, collected by Augusto V. Aula, July 1944 (not examined by author).

• CONTENT. *Platemys pallidipectoris* is a monotypic species.

• DEFINITION. Adults grow to 175 mm in carapace length; there is no apparent sexual dimorphism in size. The flat, ovate carapace widens posteriorly and has a shallow middorsal groove extending from the posterior half of the first vertebral to the anterior half of the fifth vertebral scute. In adults, the first three vertebrals are wider than long, whereas the fourth is narrower than long (wider than long in juveniles), and the fifth equal in length and width or only slightly wider than long. The cervical is longer than wide. The marginal scutes are unserrated; the anterior and posterior most are wide and flat; the lateral ones are narrow and upturned. The posterior marginals are depressed over the thighs. The carapace is highest at the level of the seam between the second and third vertebrals and widest at the level of the eighth marginals. In color, the carapace is gray-brown, yellow-brown or olive, and often has dark seam borders. The plastron and bridge are yellow with a broad, dark seam following pattern. The forelobe is broader than the hindlobe; the hindlobe has a wide posterior notch. The intergular scute is approximately half as long as the length of the plastral forelobe. The head has a wide yellowish medial stripe bordered on each side by a gray-brown lateral stripe. The tympanum is yellowish. The dorsal surface of the head is covered with large scales. The iris is white. The neck is gray-brown dorsally blending into grayish-yellow ventrally. Its dorsal and lateral surfaces bear large conical tubercles. The yellow legs are covered with large scales and the toes are webbed. On each thigh, near the tail, is a series of enlarged conical tubercles, at least one of which is distinctly larger than the rest.

The males have concave plastra; longer, thicker tails with the vent beyond the carapace; and better developed thigh tubercles than do the females.

• DESCRIPTIONS. Descriptions of adults are presented in Freiberg (1945, 1947, 1954, 1967, 1971, 1972), Mertens (1954), and Pritchard (1967, 1979).

• ILLUSTRATIONS. Drawings or black and white photographs of adults are found in Freiberg (1954), Mertens (1954), and Wermuth and Mertens (1961). Drawings of the shell are in Freiberg (1945, 1971, 1981) and Wermuth and Mertens (1961). Photographs or drawings of the plastron occur in Freiberg (1945, 1947, 1967,

1971), Wermuth and Mertens (1961), and Pritchard (1979). Mertens (1954) presents a photograph of the thigh showing the enlarged tubercles.

• DISTRIBUTION. *Platemys pallidipectoris* is known only from the vicinity of the type-locality in the Argentine Chaco (Freiberg, 1945, 1947) and from Apalue (?), Paraguay as "*Platemys spixii*" (Schenkel, 1901). It may also occur in southern Bolivia (Rhodin, 1982).

• FOSSIL RECORD. None.

• PERTINENT LITERATURE. Other than descriptions, very little has been written about *Platemys pallidipectoris*. Freiberg (1945, 1947, 1967) and Mertens (1954) include brief observations on wild and captive individuals. Parsons (1968) discusses the choanal structure. A list of the species' vernacular names and their meanings is in Mittermeier et al. (1980).

• ETYMOLOGY. The specific name *pallidipectoris* is derived from the Latin words *pallidus* (pale) and *pectoris* (breast), and refers to the yellow plastron of the holotype.

COMMENT

Since so little is known about *Platemys pallidipectoris*, a thorough life history study is needed. The species seems more closely related to *P. radiolata* and *P. spixii* than to *P. platycephala*.

The DEFINITION was based on examination of the male Allotype (Amer. Mus. Natur. Hist. 117675; Freiberg, 1947), a specimen in the Senckenberg Museum, Frankfurt, West Germany (60859), and literature descriptions.

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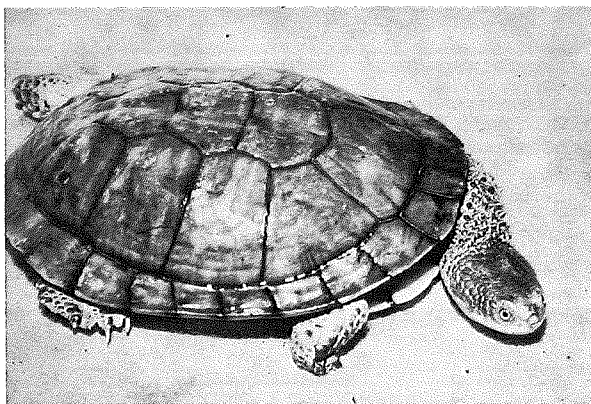
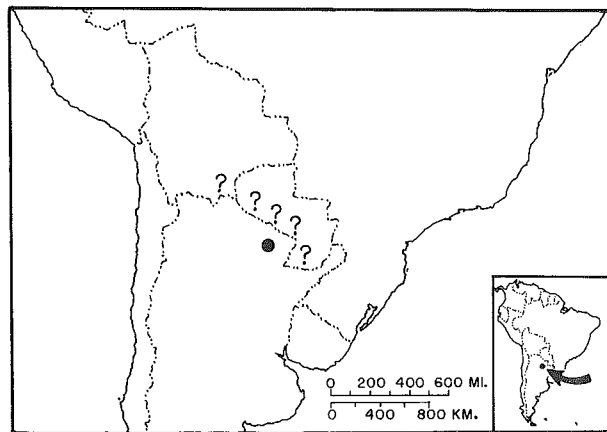


FIGURE 1. *Platemys pallidipectoris*. Photograph by Klaus Methner Lehmann.



MAP. The solid circle marks the type-locality. Question marks indicate areas of possible occurrence. A record from Paraguay cannot yet be mapped.

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