

This is the upper shell of the eastern box turtle called the carapace.

vertebral scutes
costal scutes
marginal scutes

Box turtles eat snails, slugs, earthworms, strawberries and mushrooms. Some, like the *amanita muscaria* mushroom are poisonous to man but can be eaten by turtles.

The lower shell is the plastron.

Mossy is an eastern box turtle, *terrapene caroline* - The eastern box turtle is terrestrial which means it lives primarily on land. A male eastern box turtle usually has red eyes. A female most often has golden eyes and a rounder carapace. This kind of turtle can live to be 100 years old. The turtles do not grow gardens on their backs.



Fern, our resident painted turtle
chrysemys picta

Scan this code with your smart
phones's QR Reader and Jan Brett
will show you how to draw Mossy.



We created a turtle pond next to our house where we have a spring. We located the pond in a sunny spot because turtles, even the aquatic ones, need to sun themselves. We constructed the pond with built-in caves under water where a turtle could hide from predators like raccoons and fisher cats. It is 3-1/2' deep, lower than the frost line, allowing a turtle to hibernate in the bottom mud in winter. We planted strawberries and lingonberries, foods that turtles love. There is an area filled with soft sand to entice a female to lay her eggs. A naturalist and turtle specialist and author David Carroll explained to us that rather than stocking our pond we should create a good environment and turtles would wander in from surrounding wetlands.