

**Our original plan was to collect and hatch turtles for reintroduction into the wild; but after meeting with representatives from the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and state biologists, as well as representatives from Zoo Atlanta it was agreed upon that our program may be premature. There is still a lot that is unknown about their status in the wild as well as the health of their habitat.**

**So we decided to shift the focus of the program to data collection and habitat surveys. To this end, we assisted Jim Godwin, Biologist with Alabama Natural Heritage Program, with capture and data collection of Flattened Musk Turtles.**

**Zoo staff made several trips to assist with capture and tracking. This involved wading down river and looking for turtles and capturing them by hand, as well as setting traps. Data, such as size and gender, was collected on captured individuals and some animals were fitted with tracking devices. Animals were then released at their site of capture.**

**Wildlife biologists working with the Alabama Natural Heritage Program tracked the animals throughout the summer and collected additional data. The data is being analyzed, and plans are being made to try again in the spring of 2014.**