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Beobachtung an Wüsten-Dosenschildkröten, *Terrapene ornata luteola*, in ihrer natürlichen Umgebung in New Mexico

Observations of desert box turtles *Terrapene ornata luteola* in their natural habitat in New Mexico

Abstract

The author describes his observations on *Terrapene ornata luteola* during a trip to New Mexico, USA, at the end of August 2007. This article focuses on a dry habitat south of Belen where he found two *Terrapene ornata luteola* in a desert like landscape. The vegetation consist of *Opuntia* cacti (*O. erinacea*, *O. cymochila*), *Yucca glauca*, *Artemisia filifolia* and grasses. Sympatric lizard species that he found were: *Uta stansburiana*, *Aspidoscelis neomexicana* and *Gambelia wislizenii*. In August the rains can be intense and create temporary pools.

Both ornate box turtles had striking plastron markings. The author found grasshoppers (*Melanoplus bowditchi*), preying mantis (*Stagmomantis californica*) and a few big centipedes (*Scolopendra polymorpha*). The question is whether or not these invertebrates are a food source for *Terrapene*.

Key words

Testudines: Emididae, *Terrapene ornata luteola*, habitat, fauna and flora, New Mexico, USA

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