



## FL - Florida Petition Seeks to Protect Diamondback Terrapin Turtles From Drowning in Crab Traps

Conservation groups filed a petition today asking the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to adopt regulations that would protect diamondback terrapins from drowning in blue crab pots. These imperiled turtles are suffering population declines.

Elise Bennett,  
Center for Biological Diversity

Diamondback terrapins, found along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts from Massachusetts to Texas, are the only turtles in the world that live exclusively in coastal estuaries. These estuaries are also home to blue crabs, which are trapped in crab pots by an active blue crab fishery.

“Terrapins are needlessly drowning in crab pots, and there’s a simple solution,” said Elise Bennett, a Center attorney who focuses on protecting reptiles and amphibians. “We’re asking state wildlife officials to protect our turtles so Floridians and visitors can enjoy them for years to come.”

The petition, filed by the Center for Biological Diversity, Florida Turtle Conservation Trust and Diamondback Terrapin Working Group, asks the state to require bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) on all recreational and commercial blue crab pots.



When affixed to crab-pot entrance funnels, these small and inexpensive devices prevent most terrapins from entering the pot while having little to no effect on crab haul.