

**GRAPTEMYS GIBBONSI** (Pascagoula Map Turtle). **PREDATION.** On 26 September 1999, a ca. 600 g spotted bass (*Micropterus punctulatus*) was caught in Pushepatapa Creek, NW of Hwy 21, in Washington Parish, Louisiana, USA. While cleaning the fish, a small specimen of *Graptemys gibbonsi* (NLU 70484) was dissected from the stomach. The turtle measured 35.6 mm in carapace length and 31.5 mm plastron length. It was a recently emerged hatchling as judged by the presence of an acute ventral flexure of the bridge along the longitudinal seam between pectoral-abdominal and marginal scutes, plus a plastral fontanelle indicating the presence of a fresh umbilical scar at the time of death. Damage to the specimen was limited to the margin of the posterior carapace where peripheral bones and/or marginal scutes were missing from ca. marginals 6–9 on the left and 4–12 on the right. Costal scutes 3 and 4 on the right were also missing.

There are no previous reports of specific predators for any life stage of this species (Ernst et al. 1994. *Turtles of the United States and Canada*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, DC. 578

pp.). Predatory fish such as bass have only infrequently been reported to eat hatchling turtles (Semlitsch and Gibbons 1989. *Copeia* 1989:1030–1031; Britson and Gutzke 1993. *Copeia* 435–440); however, it is not possible to state whether the specimen reported here was ingested alive or dead. Both studies reported that *Micropterus salmoides* (largemouth bass) eat dead hatchling turtles, but not live ones. The presence of the hatchling in a fish at this location indicates that there is nesting along Pushepatapa Creek by *G. gibbonsi*, and that nest emergence occurs in late summer-early fall.

We thank Randy Lanctot for saving the specimen and depositing it in the Museum of Natural History.

Submitted by **JOHN L. CARR**, Department of Biology, The University of Louisiana at Monroe, Monroe, Louisiana 71209-0520, USA, and **MARTHA ANN MESSINGER**, 2022 Gemini Drive, Bastrop, Louisiana 71220-3467, USA.