

MORIAH MORRIS and ZACHARY LOUGHMAN, Department of Organismal, Ecology, and Zoo Science Biology, West Liberty University, West Liberty, WV, 26074. Microhabitat Determinants of Nesting-Site Selection in Ornate Box Turtles (*Terrapene ornata ornata*): Implications for Conservation Management.

Ornate box turtles (*Terrapene ornata ornata*) exhibit selective nesting behaviors that may be influenced by multiple microhabitat factors. This study aims to identify and quantify the key environmental variables that drive nesting-site selection in this species. We will survey a previously established nesting ground, dividing it into block transects to systematically measure covariates such as soil type, thermal profiles, and plant community composition. After locating nests within the transects, we will categorize sites with and without nests and compare associated microhabitat variables using robust statistical modeling. The results will provide insight into the ecological requirements for ornate box turtle nesting and inform conservation management strategies.