

Baby turtle surprises Waban adventurers

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Editor's Note. Members of Waban's TREE (Therapeutic Recreation and Environmental Education) Program have been conducting water quality studies at Bauneg Beg Lake and will be reporting routinely on the results of their educational investigations. This is the second installment in a series of updates from the program.

SANFORD — Bauneg Beg Lake is full of little surprises!

Brianna, a member of Waban's Adventure Program, saw what appeared to be a rock but then noticed that the "rock" had a tail and it was moving. She temporarily halted her dissolved oxygen test for a closer inspection and discovered a newborn snapping turtle about the size of a walnut.

Students learn at an early age in school what turtles look like, where they live, what they eat, and the common names of local species. Few, though, have ever had the experience that Brianna had, of glancing down and noticing a baby snapping turtle while taking a water sample. What would have been a typical September day of testing for the Adventure Group at Camp Waban turned into an impromptu environmental lesson on snapping turtles.

Confirmation came from the York Center for Wildlife that the turtle was newly hatched and the size was common for snapping turtles that are typically born in late August through September.

After the Adventure Group had viewed the tiny turtle, they continued to gather their weekly surface water quality samples of temperature, dissolved oxygen (DO), water clarity, and pH. Along with discovering a new inhabitant of Bauneg Beg Lake, the Adventure Group found the lake to be 19 degrees Celsius (66.2 degrees Fahrenheit) with a pH reading of 7, a DO reading of 7 ppm (parts per million), and the water clarity to be moderately clear.



courtesy photo A member of Waban's Adventure Program came across this baby snapping turtle while testing the water quality at Bauneg Beg Lake earlier this Fall.