

The Nature of Southborough: Who dug up the turtle eggs?

The latest in Southborough Open Land Foundation's contributed series focuses on the Common Snapping Turtle (*Chelydra Serpentina*)

by [BETH MELQ](#) on [SEPTEMBER 11, 2026](#)



Above: A look at the Common Snapping Turtle (images cropped from photos contributed by SOLF)

[This post is part of a special guest series focused on appreciating nature in Southborough, contributed by the [Southborough Open Land Foundation](#) (SOLF), a non-profit dedicated to preserving and stewarding natural resources here in town.]

From late spring through early summer is when a female snapping turtle hauls her heavy self out of the Sudbury river and makes her way through a lawn, a couple flower beds and up onto the septic mound to lay her eggs. The warm sandy soil there is just right.

She digs a hole with her hind legs and releases her eggs into the hole, pushes the soil back in and returns to the river.



After approximately 12 weeks the babies hatch out of their rubbery shells, dig themselves out of the hole and follow their instincts to the nearest body of water.

BUT! Not this year! At some point in late August, a predator with a keen sense of smell (like a skunk) located the buried clutches of eggs, dug them all up and ate them!



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Debbie Costine (a SOLF Trustee, artist and curious naturalist)

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Updated (9/14/26 1:40 pm): Editor's Note: I fixed the captions that weren't showing up for the last two pics.

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