

## Excerpt One of *Letters - Testudinata Rescue and Biodiversity*:

### Urgency in its conservation

By GAO Yilei

**Abstract:** Testudinata was once abundant in the wild across China. However, due to excessive hunting, coupled with habitat decline and environmental pollution, it has been exceedingly rare to witness them in the wild today. Urgent measures are imperative for the conservation of these species. There are several conservation challenges for Testudinata: the nationally protected wildlife predominantly centers on mammals and birds, while reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates require increased attention; in the realm of wild reptile trade, Testudinata is a prominent group, with its consumption and use in traditional medicine leading to extensive poaching of wild populations. This is primarily due to ineffective regulation and a lack of expertise among law enforcement officials, who struggle to distinguish between Wild Caught (WC) and Captive Breeding (CB) ones, and cut at one stroke in dealing with them, leading to the embarrassing situation of beginning at the wrong end; and there is an urgent need to enhance public awareness for nature conservation.

**Key words:** Testudinata, conservation, biodiversity

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