

## Blanding's Turtle Population Estimate

8 September 2011

As part of the mitigation measures for the Terry Fox Drive construction, Dillon was asked by the City of Ottawa to assess the population of Blanding's turtles in the controversial South March Highlands, near Kanata. Our work will assist in the protection of a nationally listed Species at Risk, as urban development approaches their habitats. **Shawn Taylor** holds one of two Endangered Species Act permits in the province, a rarity in a consultancy.



Ottawa University student **Rebecca Rochman** injects an electronic passive identification tag in the leg of a turtle while **Caleb Hasler** holds the leg steady.



Our first capture, a big alpha male named **Flaney** after Ottawa CRM **Mike Flainek**. Flaney has a radio transmitter attached so we can track his movements over the next two years.

In the fall of 2010, **Jessica Wright**, **Brandon Maynard** and **Alex Zeller** started the field work with some preliminary trapping. Then in 2011, Dillon fielded a team of three summer students, led by our newest biologist, **Caleb Hasler**, conducting a mark-recapture population estimate on these secretive turtles. Over 12 weeks, the team was able to trap 73 animals and put active radio transmitters on 13 of them. Caleb and **Kevin Robinson** are currently tracking them by radio telemetry three times a week to determine the population distribution, their range of movement and over-wintering hibernacula. Their range calculations will help set the development limits for our real estate clients like Minto and Urbandale.