

The GSO of the Natural Resource Ecology and Management Department  
*is pleased to announce this week's seminar speaker:*

# Dr. Joshua Otten

Assistant Professor of Biology  
Cornell College



## **“Turtles in trouble: Slow and steady declines in the Anthropocene”**

Friday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024

Science Hall II, Room 220 & via Webex

3:10 pm – 4 pm

*All are welcome!*

## Talk Description:

Dr. Otten's talk will focus on chelonian projects he has been a part of in the last 10 years, specifically looking at human impacts to turtles' home ranges, behavior, and basic ecology. He will first discuss wood turtle work in Iowa as part of his master's thesis at University of Northern Iowa. He will then talk about the largest turtle rescue and rehabilitation project in response to the largest freshwater oil spill to occur in the US. Specifically, he will discuss his observations ten years later regarding long-term impacts, translocation success, and whether rehabilitation was beneficial. He will conclude with a discussion of current projects at Big Sand Mound, where he and collaborators are looking at trends in nest success and survival related to removing raccoons (75 in 2024). They are also evaluating nest depths and temperatures of 6 different TSD (temperature-dependent sex determination) species that occur there. Finally, he will discuss their use of light level dataloggers to determine basking behavior over the course of the year.

## Speaker Background:

Dr. Otten grew up in Iowa. He started his undergraduate studies at University of Northern Iowa (UNI) and realized he was interested in Ecology, so he transferred to ISU, where he received a degree in Animal Ecology with a wildlife emphasis. He completed a variety of wildlife technician jobs before working on the first 3 years of the Iowa MSIM (Multiple Species Inventory and Monitoring) project. He then spent ten years as an environmental consultant working on a wide variety of projects across the country before returning to UNI for a master's degree. He then pursued a PhD at the University of Toledo, before finally coming back to Iowa as faculty at Cornell College.

