

PSEUDEMYX TEXANA (Texas River Cooter). **NESTING INTERFERENCE.** The exotic red fire ant, *Solenopsis invicta*, has been reported to have an adverse affect on both invertebrates (Porter 1990. Ecology 71:2095-2106) and vertebrates (Mount et al. 1981. J. Alabama Acad. Sci. 52:71-78). In the case of turtles, Mount et al. (*op. cit.*) report several instances of hatchling turtle mortality due to fire ants; however, fire ants have not been reported to interfere with adult turtles during nest construction.

During a herpetofaunal survey of Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas (11 June 1993), a *Pseudemys texana* was discovered in the initial stages of nest excavation. The turtle was discovered at ca. 1115 h, and probably had been digging for less than 1 h. At that time the turtle was covered with ca. 150-200 fire ants. These ants were probably from two colonies located about 3 m away. Observer interference was kept to a minimum by periodically checking the turtle from a distance using binoculars. After 45 min the turtle ceased nest excavation, and returned to the nearest pond ca. 100 m away. The irritation caused by the fire ants presumably prevented the *P. texana* from completing the nesting process.

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