

Macroscopic anatomy of the cloaca in *Kinosternon scorpioides*

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The scorpion mud turtle (*Kinosternon scorpioides scorpioides*) is one of the least known and most threatened turtle species. Its hunt is prohibited, but in the states of Maranhão and Pará, its meat is a culinary treat and is served illegally in fancy hotels and restaurants, prepared and served in its own carapace as “casquinha de muçua”. The capture is done in large scales with methods that compromise their habitat, putting it in danger of extinction. The cloaca is the terminal end common to the digestive, urinary and reproductive systems with three antechambers responsible for the storage of secretions, denominated as proctodeum for genital secretions; urodeum for urine and coprodeum for feces. This study intends to describe the macroscopic anatomy of scorpion mud turtle’s cloaca. Six adult animals conceded by IBAMA-MA (license n°. 006/2002 and process n°. 022012001113/2002-81) were used. Fixated in formaldehyde at 10%, they were dissected macroscopically under a magnifying glass, and later on colored latex was injected in their arterial circuit. The results showed that the cloaca of *K. scorpioides* is the only exit for secretions and excrements originating from the digestive, urinary and reproductive systems. It is divided in three segments, proctodeum, coprodeum and urodeum, from where the terminations of colon, male deferential ducts or female oviducts and ureters are discharged. Externally to the cloaca, a well developed penis is observed in males while a clitoris is seen on females. The cloaca’s inside tissues are formed by cloacal folders of varied coloration, dark in males and pale pink in females. The cloaca is irrigated by the cloacal artery, a direct branch from the dorsal aorta and by little branches of the left and right iliac arteries. It’s possible to conclude that the cloaca of *K. scorpioides* is similar macroscopically to the morphological standard of other chelonian species.

Keywords: macroscopic, cloaca, scorpion mud turtle.

Financial support: UEMA and CNPq.