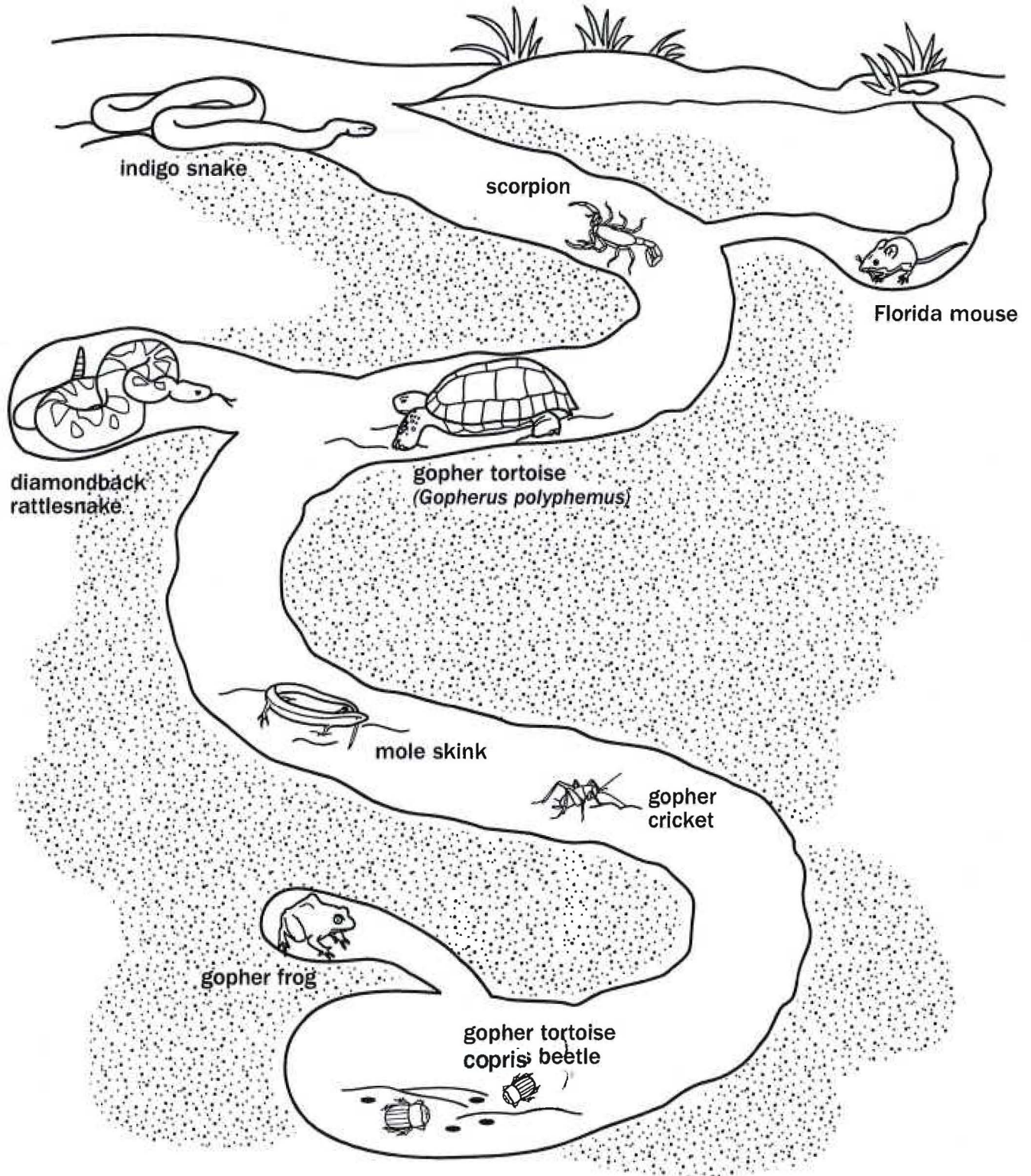


# Gopher tortoise burrow



A gopher tortoise burrow may be a residence or temporary shelter for approximately 300-400 species of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates, but not all will live there at the same time. These burrows are important for wildlife biodiversity and are protected by law. The gopher tortoise is called a keystone species because its burrow is needed for many other species to stay healthy or survive.



# Gopher Frog

## (*Lithobates capito*)



Gopher frogs occurs throughout the Southeastern Coastal Plain. The live in longleaf pine-wiregrass flatwoods and longleaf-pine turkey oak sandhills. These frogs are dependent on isolated wetlands in the fall for breeding and egg development.

Gopher frogs are frequently found in gopher tortoise burrows. Gopher tortoise burrows offer safety and humidity. Due to the loss of habitat the gopher frog is a species of conservation concern in Georgia, and is listed as rare.



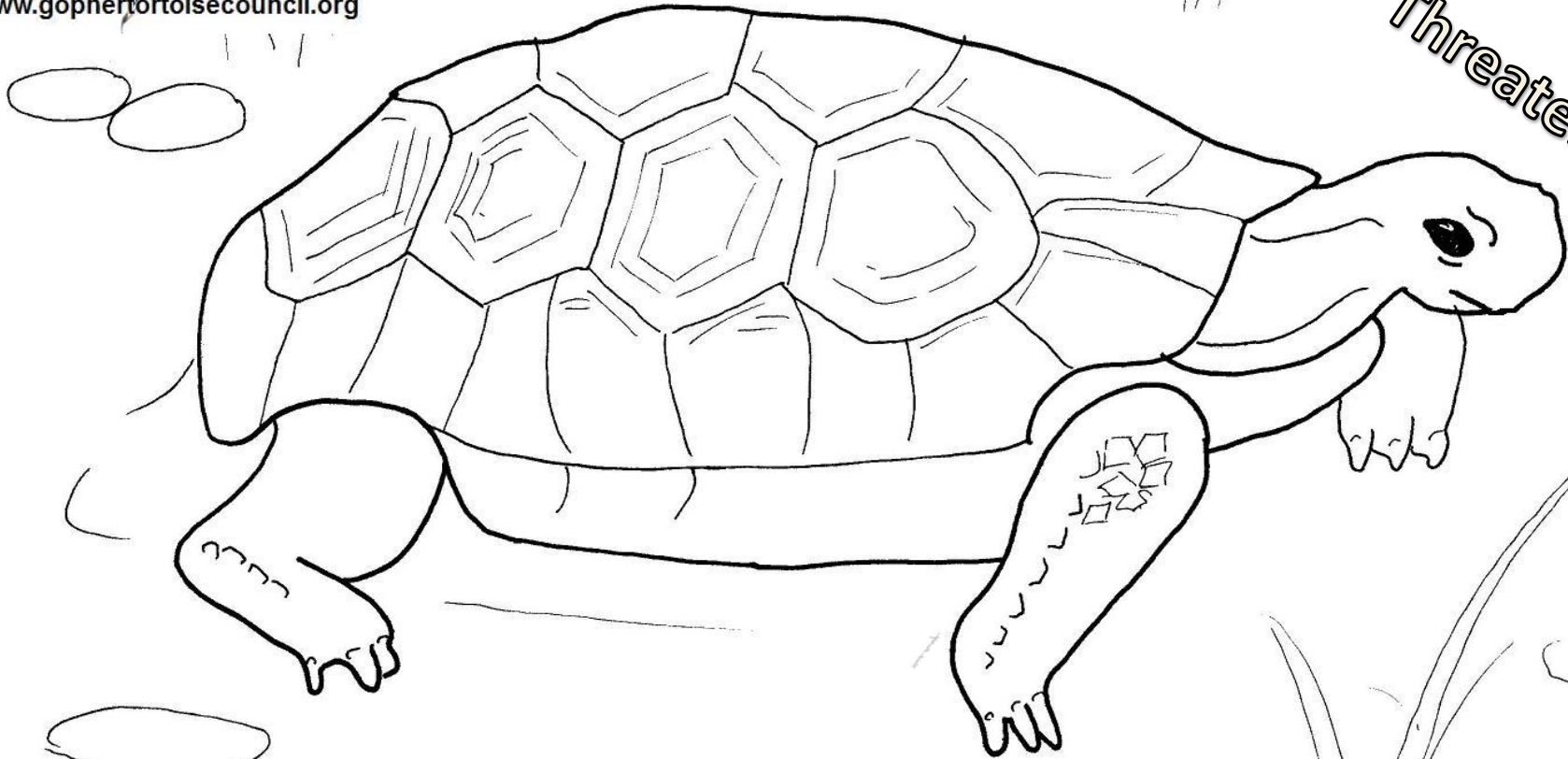


[www.gophertortoisecouncil.org](http://www.gophertortoisecouncil.org)

# Gopher Tortoise

## (*Gopherus polyphemus*)

Threatened



Gopher tortoises occur in upland habitats throughout the coastal plain of the southeastern United States. Gopher tortoises are found in longleaf pine sandhills, xeric oak hammocks, scrub, pine flatwoods, dry prairies, and coastal dunes. Tortoises can also live in man-made environments, such as pastures, old fields, and roadsides.

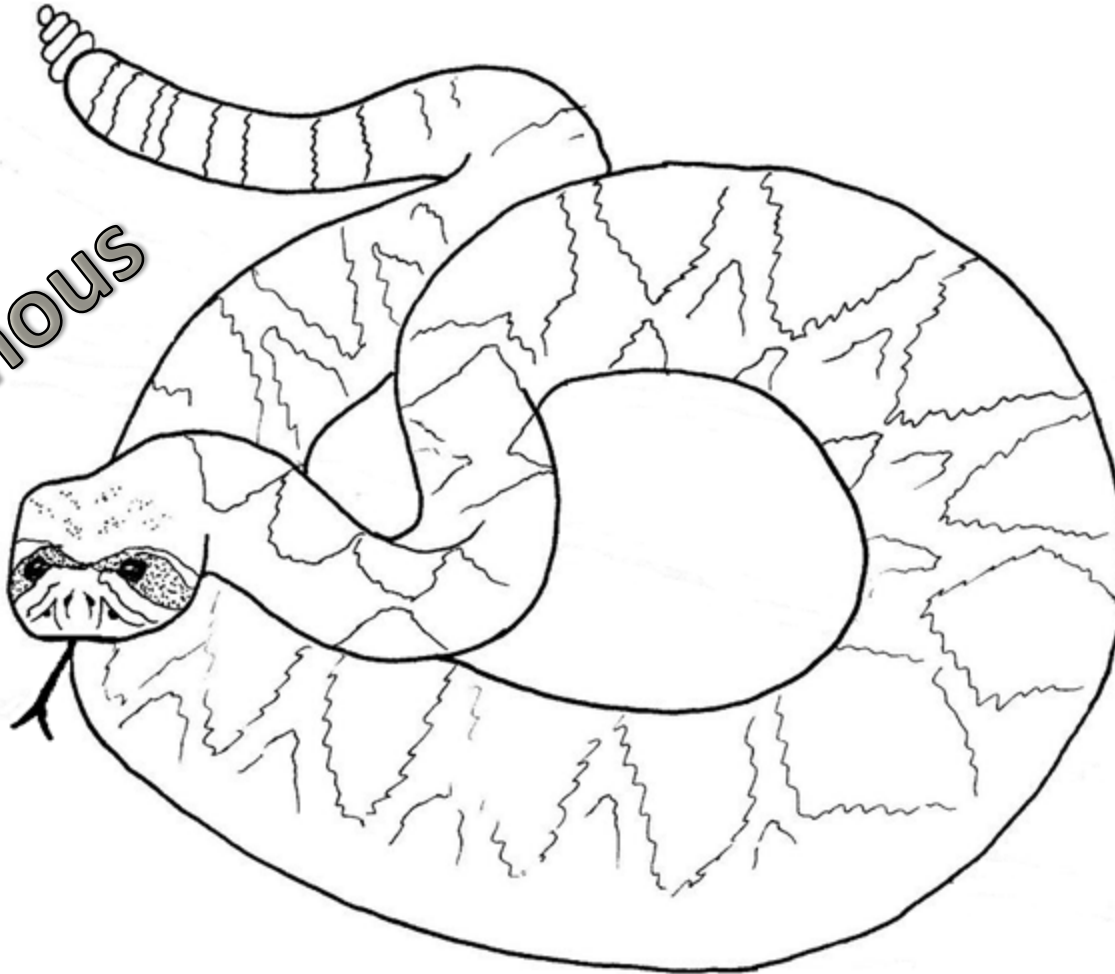
Grasses and legumes make up the bulk of their diet. They also eat a large variety of herbaceous plants including gopher apple, pawpaw, blackberries, saw palmetto berries, and other fruits.

The life of a gopher tortoise revolves around a tunnel-like burrow that is excavated using its shovel-like front feet. Burrows can be up to 40 feet in length and 10 feet in depth. Gopher tortoises are thought to live in excess of 60 years.

# Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake

*(Crotalus adamanteus)*

Venomous



[www.gophertortoisecouncil.org](http://www.gophertortoisecouncil.org)

The eastern diamondback ranges along the coastal lowlands from southeastern North Carolina to eastern Louisiana, including all of Florida and the Keys. It is most often thought of as an inhabitant of xeric (dry) uplands such as sandhills, clayhills and scrub. During the winter, diamondbacks take refuge in **gopher tortoise** and armadillo burrows, stump holes, and other underground cavities.

Diamondbacks may live 20 years or more. The bulk of its prey consists of rabbits and cotton rats. Eastern diamondbacks have large home ranges that may encompass as much as 500 acres.