

### Art in Herpetology — Lori Dunn

Canadian wildlife artist **Lori Dunn** has had a long history of combining science and art. With a natural artistic ability from a very early age, teachers tried to steer her towards a career in art, but her real desire was to study nature and wildlife. Enrolling in the zoology program at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada was a first step towards gleaming the knowledge she craved. Lori was interested in all forms of nature, but she was always drawn towards those creatures that other people paid little attention to, or were even frightened of.

Lori's particular affinity for herps was nurtured one summer while working as a volunteer keeper's aide in the reptile house at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. At that time most of the keepers were male, and she wasn't sure how well she would fit in. However, the keepers embraced her enthusiasm and dedication and allowed her much more responsibility for the collection than she ever imagined. She had a particular flair for decorating exhibits and was often employed for this task. Lori considers this early experience incredibly rewarding and it fostered her desire to be an advocate for this misunderstood group of animals.

After graduating with her zoology degree, Lori embarked on a 15-year career as a zookeeper in Canada, spending much of her time working with amphibians and reptiles, doing public presentations and volunteering her free time toward conservation efforts in Ontario including surveys, habitat restoration, and outreach. Eventually, Lori left zookeeping to finally embark on a new journey as an artist. She feels that her need to put her animal education and experience first was key

to her eventual success as a wildlife artist, and she still considers herself a naturalist first, with artwork a vehicle to express her passion to the viewer.

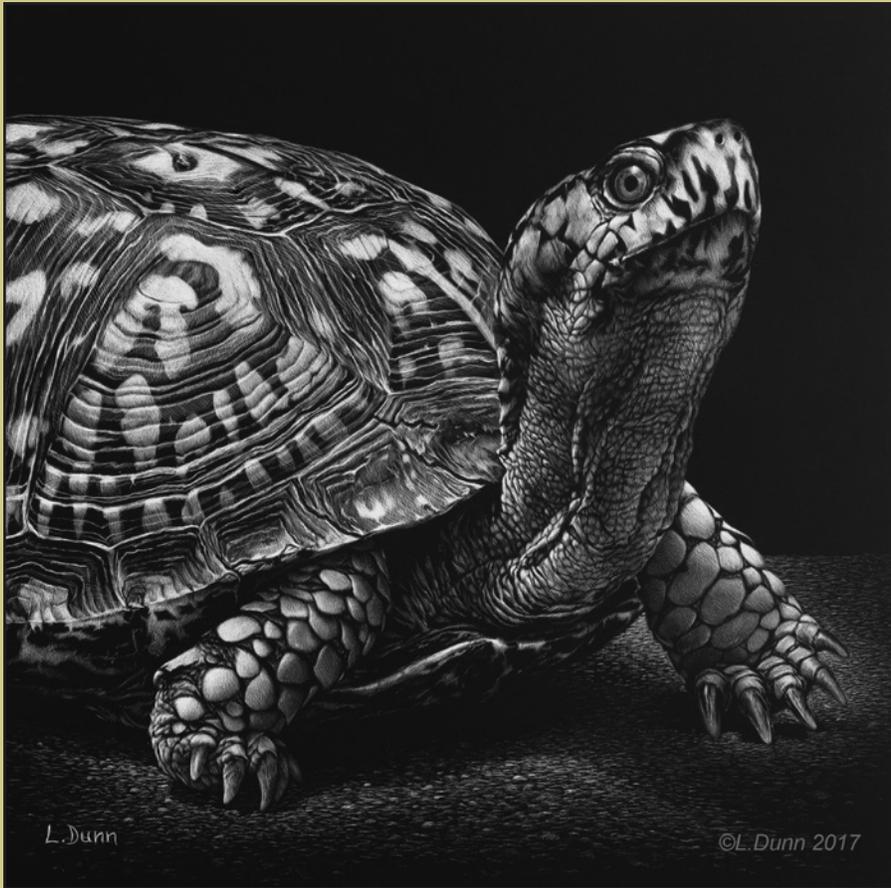
Lori's chosen medium of scratchboard consists of three layers of material. A hardboard base is coated with a layer of white kaolin clay, sanded smooth, and a layer of black India ink applied over top. The image is engraved through the ink into the clay layer using an extremely fine tool such as a surgical scalpel blade. This medium is considered by many artists to be one of the most difficult to master. It takes a very steady hand to maintain the correct pressure required to etch each fine line to a particular depth to achieve tonal variation. Lori particularly loves this medium for the ability to focus on light and shadow, rather than color, as well as the unsurpassed level of detail that can be created using just the tip of the knife.

Lori Dunn's scratchboard artworks have garnered national and international recognition, winning awards in several world-class exhibitions. She is a signature member of the Society of Animal Artists, and a Master member and Marketing Director of the International Society of Scratchboard Artists. She currently teaches scratchboard art via private lessons and workshops. Lori works from her pioneer log home in Norwood, Ontario, Canada, and when she isn't creating artwork she is invariably out kayaking, hiking and, of course, herping!

For more information and artwork for sale, visit [www.loridunnart.com](http://www.loridunnart.com)



"On A Grand Scale" 9 x 20 – Neotropical Rattlesnake (*Crotalus durissus*)



"Slow But Steady" 8 x 8 – Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*)

"Sunset Encounter" 12 x 12 – Sonoran Desert Sidewinder (*Crotalus cerastes cercobombus*). Winner of the Society of Animal Artists Award of Excellence 2018

