

Common Name: African Spurred Tortoise

Latin Name: Geochelone sulcata



Distribution:	Africa	Natural Habitat:	Dry Savannah
Adult Size:	2.5 feet	Diet:	Herbivore
Life Span:	50+ Years		

NATURAL HABITAT

North-Central Africa south of the Sahara Desert from Mauritania to Ethiopia. It is the world's third largest tortoise.

HOUSING

These should be kept individually or if in groups never keep two males together. A dry savanna or semi arid environment should be provided. However a large water dish should be provided for them to bathe in. They should NOT be kept in the garden all year round due to the fact our temperatures and high rainfall can create many health problems. If on a hot sunny day you wish to put them in the garden, they should be placed in a run to prevent them from escaping and avoid injuries caused by predators. Remove any plants which may be toxic to tortoises.

These tortoises get huge and the enclosure should reflect this. They also like to dig. Hides should be provided. A basking light and UVA & UVB lighting is necessary for the health and well-being of the tortoise. This should be on for 12-14 hours a day.

Daily maintenance is required which involves picking out droppings, changing water and feeding your tortoise.

TEMPERATURE

To ensure the tortoise can thermoregulate effectively there should be a thermal gradient provided by using a basking light at one end, or a mercury vapour lamp.

A day temperature should range between 27-35°C (80 to 95°F).

Maintain night temperature range between 21-24°C (70-75°F).

FOOD & FEEDING

Primarily vegetarian and they eat a lot! The ideal foods are grasses, prairie hay, clover and include 'safe' weeds such as Dandelions. Ensure a wide range of vegetables in the diet (not iceberg lettuce). Some fruit can be added. Ensure a good vitamin and mineral supplement is used, alternatively we have pellets that are available which are palatable but also ensure the correct vitamins and minerals are being eaten.

HIBERNATION

It is not necessary to hibernate this species of tortoise.

HEALTH

Tortoises can live for 50 years plus in captivity. An environment and diet as described above will preclude most problems. The most often encountered disease will be a metabolic bone disorder caused by insufficient vitamin D3 or calcium. They are also prone to upper respiratory problems when kept at cooler temperatures. If any illness is suspected then consult a good exotic vet.

All reptiles possess zoonotic properties so ensure you wash your hands after handling your reptile.

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