

38 Edible Flowers for Herbivorous Reptiles!

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Did you know that reptiles can eat flowers, too? Not all flowers are edible, of course — just like not all plants are edible. And not all reptiles are interested in eating them. However, flowers form a significant portion of the diet of many reptile species, including:

- Desert iguana¹
- Green iguana²
- Mexican spiny-tailed iguana³
- Red-footed tortoise⁴
- Yellow-footed tortoise⁴
- Gopher tortoise⁵
- Horsfield's tortoise⁶
- Radiated tortoise⁷
- *Uromastyx microlepis*⁸
- *Uromastyx hardwicki*⁹
- Gargoyle gecko¹⁰

It is assumed that most wild omnivorous and herbivorous reptiles will eat flowers whenever encountered, and this can form a large portion of their diet during seasons when flowers are most abundant. This is supported by the observation that, in captivity, most omnivorous and

herbivorous reptiles respond enthusiastically to bright “flower” colors such as red, yellow, and orange.

Intentional florivory has even been noted on a smaller scale in some lizards otherwise considered insectivorous! ¹¹

Benefits of Including Flowers in Your Reptile’s Diet

Replicating the components of your reptile’s natural diet — the diet that its body and digestive tract have evolved to handle and thrive upon — is essential to keeping them healthy and happy long-term. So if you have a species of reptile that is known to eat flowers, the question is not whether you should offer them, but why *not*?

Aside from the appeal of naturalism, flowers add to the nutritional variety present in a reptile’s diet, as they’re relatively rich in vitamins and other nutrients. This variety in textures and flavors also acts as a source of sensory enrichment. Plus, they have a pleasant flavor, which makes them a great option for a low-calorie treat (perfect for bribing your pet into spending time with you!).

Edible Flowers for Herbivorous Reptiles

- African Violet
- Alyssum
- Aster
- Astilbe
- Bachelors Buttons
- Balloon Flower
- Begonia
- Bergamot
- Bindweed
- California Poppy
- Campanula/Bellflower
- Chrysanthemum
- Clover
- Coneflower
- Coreopsis
- Cosmos
- Creosote
- Dahlia
- Dandelion
- Daylily
- Evening Primrose
- Geranium
- Gerbera Daisy
- Hibiscus
- Hollyhock
- Hosta
- Lilac

- Marigold
- Nasturtium
- Pansy
- Petunia
- Phlox
- Rose
- Squash flower
- Sunflower
- Viola
- Yucca
- Zinnia

Don't see the plant you're looking for on this list? Double-check with [The Tortoise Table!](#)

Where Can You Get Edible Flowers for Your Reptile?

Before you head to your local flower shop or nursery, STOP! Flowers sold for decoration are typically *covered* in chemicals to protect them from bugs and extend their lifespan.

Grocery Store

Sometimes you can find edible flowers at the grocery store, like pansies. However, this is unlikely to yield much of a variety, and depending on where you live, flowers may not be available at all.

Foraging

Alternatively, you can forage for edible wildflowers in natural areas unlikely to have been touched by chemicals. This is a great way to find a wide variety of seasonal flowers enriched by healthy, non-depleted soil. That being said, make sure to triple-check your ID to make sure you don't accidentally feed your pet something poisonous! If you're not 100% confident about what kind of flower you're looking at, it's best to pick something else.

Beware of picking flowers out of your yard, your neighbor's yard, or the local park – you must be 100% certain that these plants have never come into contact with pesticides, fertilizers, or other chemicals before picking them to feed to your reptile.

Grow Your Own

Generally speaking, the safest and most effective way to get edible flowers for herbivorous reptiles is to grow them yourself! It's usually quite easy to do. If you already have a vegetable or flower garden, simply add the edible varieties to what you're already growing. If you don't, you can grow flowers in an outdoor pot or window box, or even an indoor grow kit! Of course, when you're growing your flowers, never use any kind of chemicals on or near the plants.

Conclusion

If you have an herbivorous pet reptile, you know that dietary variety is essential to their wellbeing. Flowers are a great way to add to that nutritional variety in a healthy way, while also offering sensory enrichment.

Even if your reptile is omnivorous or insectivorous, it's possible they may enjoy the occasional flower as well! Do note, however, that while florivory has been observed in many species of lizard and tortoise, this is more questionable for freshwater turtles. Furthermore, as may be guessed by their exclusively carnivorous diet, snakes are assumed not to eat flowers (or any kind of plant matter) at all.

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