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Photo by Pisces Pet Emporium

Aquatic Turtle

Chinese Golden Thread, Pink Belly side neck, Diamond back terrapin etc....

Mauremys sinensis, Emydura subglobosa, Malaclemys terrapin.....

Lifespan: Up to 30 years.

Size: Chinese Golden threads about 6 to 12 inches, with males being smaller, pink bellies 8-9in on average and diamond back terrapins generally get 5.5in for males and up to 11in for females

Sexing: Males have an extremely concave plastron, and some have a constricted “waist” that give them a peanut shape. Females usually have a flat plastron though some can be slightly concave. Female’s eyes are also generally lighter than males.

Enclosure: This will vary based on the type of turtle you are getting. A 75-90 gallon or larger all glass tank is required for golden threads and large diamond back terrapins while pink belly side necks can generally do well in a 55-75gal aquarium. Be sure that you use a fish tank or a tank that is designed to hold water. Be sure to use a strong filter to keep the water healthy for your turtle.

Pisces recommends: Fluval Canister Filters.

Hiding/Climbing Spots: Water Turtles need a place to get out of the water, as well as a basking spot that is warmer. Large floating cork rounds and Exo Terra/Zoomed turtle islands work well but a larger turtle will need something a bit sturdier. You can also provide your turtle a larger section of land with soil/sand to allow them to nest and burrow

Substrate: Distilled or RO water is best but can get expensive. Use of tap water conditioners is essential if you are using tap water for your turtle. Many other water products can help keep ammonia and smell down in your tank, as well as prevent algae blooms. ***Pisces recommends: Peters Brand Step 1 Water Conditioner for Reptiles and Amphibians***

Heat: Maintain a water temperature of as low as 19°C to as high as 22°C (68 °F to 74 °F). Air temperature should be between 23 °C and 25 °C (73 °F to 77°F) with a basking spot of about 30 °C (88 °F). Use a heat bulb on one portion of the tank so the animal can escape the warm area if they need to. ***Pisces recommends: Exo Terra and Arcadia bulbs and fixtures for basking and the Zoomed Turtle Heater for the water.***

UV Lighting: Use of a full spectrum T5 bulb for 8-10 hours per day is required to maintain health and avoid shell and bone deformities. UVB bulbs lose effectiveness and need to be replaced every 8-12 months. ***Pisces recommends: Arcadia T5 Pro 6-12% UVB kit depending on how close to the bulb the turtle can get***

Feeding: Water turtles are mainly carnivorous and can be fed a diet of fish, shrimp, worms, and other high protein foods. Be sure to scoop extra food out of the tank so that it does not create poisonous ammonia. They should also be fed some plant material also to keep a balanced diet. If you feed your turtle a pellet food, be sure to make sure its diet is still well rounded. **Pisces recommended: Hikari Turtle Pellets**

Vitamins & Supplements: Calcium is a very important part of a turtle's diet. Letting a turtle cuttlebone float in the tank with your turtle to play with and chew on will supply them with the calcium they need.

Handling: Turtles can be handled occasionally but since they are very fragile do not pick them up high off the ground and always hold them horizontally.

Safe Handling of Reptiles*: As with all living creatures, reptiles can carry microorganisms (including Salmonella) which can make people ill. To reduce the chances of infection, always follow these safe handling steps:

- Always wash your hands thoroughly after you handle your pet, its food and anything it has touched.
- Keep your pet in a habitat designed for it; do not let your pet reptile roam around the home without proper supervision.
- Keep your pet, its food dishes and cage components out of the kitchen.
- Don't nuzzle or kiss your pet.
- Infants, children under 5 years of age, pregnant women, the elderly, and those with a compromised immune system have a greater risk of infection. Extra caution should be taken when they are in contact with any animal. Children under 5 should handle reptiles only under adult/parent supervision.

Your New Pet: It is the responsibility of any pet owner to provide their pet with regular veterinary care to maintain their pet's health and to prevent illness. Should you experience any problems with your new pet, contact Pisces Pet Emporium. We will make every effort to assist you, but we may refer you to a qualified veterinarian if the problem is beyond our ability to treat. A pet is a large responsibility and should not be purchased without due consideration. Pets should never be released into the wild.

Pisces Recommended Setup:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Glass tank (Marineland Glass Aquariums, 90gal for a golden tread, 55 for a pink belly and 75 for a terrapin) ❑ Screen top ❑ Zoomed Turtle Dock/Large Cork Flat ❑ NewCal Cuttlebone to keep beak filed down ❑ Exo Terra 150w Intense Basking lamp & Flukers 8.5in Dimmable Deluxe Clamp Lamp ❑ Zoomed TurtleTherm water heater ❑ Arcadia T5 Pro D3+ 12% UVB kit ❑ Repashy Superveggie supplement ❑ Stones/rocks to add to the bottom ❑ Hikari Turtle Pellets ❑ Night crawlers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Peters freeze dried insects for added protein and diet variation ❑ Fluval Canister Filter (based on tank size) ❑ Exo Terra digital thermometer or combometer for land portion ❑ Glass aquarium water thermometer ❑ Large gravel, fine sand for the bottom of the water (can also go bare bottom) ❑ *Zoomed Reptisoil or fine wet aquarium sand if a larger land section/nest box is provided* ❑ Large log hide/cork flat so the turtle can crawl under if it wants to hide |
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**Safe handling information courtesy of PIJAC Canada*