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Picture by Pisces Pet Emporium

Forest Tortoise

Including: Red Foot Tortoise, Yellow Foot Tortoise, etc.

Geochelone carbonaria, Geochelone denticulate, etc.

Lifespan: Up to 50 years or longer.

Size: Adults usually grow to be 12" to 16", although they can grow larger. It can take up to 15 years to reach full size.

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.

Enclosure: A 4x2x2 minimum enclosure is required for juvenile and subadults but a bigger tank is highly recommended for an adult Red or Yellow Foot Tortoise. **Pisces recommends: ExoFlex 4x2x2 PVC Reptile Lounge**

Hiding/Climbing Spots: Tortoises require at least one hiding spot, preferably with moss inside to increase the humidity but multiple hides are recommended throughout the enclosure. Ensure that the hides are not too tall to prevent falls or flips.

Humidity: The enclosure should be well ventilated and misted well to keep the humidity high (60% to 80%). Moist substrate and a water bowl can help achieve this. Use a digital hygrometer to maintain a constant humidity level.

Substrate: A mix of Cyprus mulch, soil and peat moss is best. This must be cleaned regularly to prevent health problems. **Pisces recommends: ExoTerra Plantation Soil, Zoomed Forest Floor and Reptisoil.**

Heat: Maintain a temperature of as low as 18°C at night to as high as 32°C during the day near the basking area (65 °F to 90 °F). Use a heat bulb on one portion of the tank so the animal can escape the warm area if they need to and ensure the enclosure has a good temperature gradient. **Pisces recommends: Exo Terra and Arcadia bulbs and fixtures.**

UV Lighting: Use of a full spectrum T5 bulb for 10-12 hours per day is required. UVB bulbs lose effectiveness and need to be replaced every 8-12 months. **Pisces recommends: Arcadia T5 Pro D3+ 12% UVB kit**

Feeding: Feed a daily diet mainly of fibrous vegetables, and occasionally fruit and protein. Protein can consist of earthworms, mealworms, crickets, etc. Protein is an important part of a young tortoise's diet, but it is equally important not to feed too much protein. Too much protein in the tortoise's diet can lead to malnutrition, stunted growth, improper shell growth and can lead to the death of the tortoise.

Vitamins & Supplements: Calcium and vitamins are a very important part of a tortoise's diet. Be sure to add a supplement to your tortoise's food 2-3 times per week. Powdered supplements can be sprinkled over the vegetables. ***Pisces recommends: Repashy SuperVeggie Herbavore All-In-One Vitamin.***

Handling: Tortoises can be handled 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"> ❑ PVC enclosure (EcoFlex 4x2x2 Reptile lounge) ❑ Exo Terra misting bottle ❑ Plants (live or Exo Terra/Pangea/Komodo artificial plants but if live ensure they are not toxic if eaten) ❑ Hiding cave/log, 2-3 are recommended to give a choice (Living world Tree House Real Wood log hides) ❑ Zoomed Reptisoil and Forest Floor substrate mixed to add humidity and allow for burrowing ❑ Zoomed/Exo Terra/Pet-Tekk water bowl (shallow but big enough for the tortoise to fit in) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Exo Terra ceramic feeding dish ❑ Jurassic sphagnum moss or terrarium moss for humidity ❑ Exo Terra 150w Intense Basking Spot lamp & Flukers 8.5in Dimmable Deluxe Clamp Lamp ❑ Arcadia T5 Pro D3+ 12% UVB kit ❑ Repashy SuperVeggie supplement ❑ Night crawlers, Peters freeze dried insects for extra protein ❑ Exo Terra digital thermometer and hydrometer or combometer ❑ NewCal Pets cuddle bone to ensure beak is filed down |
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**Safe handling information courtesy of PIJAC Canada*