



Technical care sheet

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Téléphone: (514) 593-5538

Indian Star Tortoise

Classification

Order : Testudines
Family : Testudinidea
Genera : Geochelone
Species : *Geochelone elegans*

Description

Adult size : 25-38 cm
Adult weight : 5-15 lbs
Life expectancy : 35-80 years
Time of activity : Diurnal

Climat parameters

Hot spot temps : 32-35 Celsius
Average temps : 28-29 Celsius
Cold side temps : 26-28 Celsius
Night temps : 24-27 Celsius
Humidity : 45-75%

Important to create micro-habitat in the terrarium to provide variation of humidity and temperature (Hot side more humid, cold side dryer. Never cold and humid, can lead to respiratory infection.) In the wild, this species experience a dry cold season and a humid and hot season.

Terrarium

Size : Baby and juvenile : 36*18*18"



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Minimum adult : 48*24*24"

Ideal adult : 72*36*24"

Substrat : Sandy mix easily draining (Mix : Repti soil 50%, fine sand 30%, stones 20%).

Light and heating

Heating : Incandescent or halogen bulb. An Additional infrared bulb might be needed for the night.

UVB :

Distance between UVB bulb and tortoise:

- 15-24 inches : T5 Arcadia 12% UVB
- 12-15 inches : T5 Arcadia 6% UVB or T5HO Zoomed 10.0
- 8-12 inches : T5HO Zoomed 5.0

Feeding

Type : Herbivor (Foliage 90%, Fruits 10%)

Staple food :

- Spring mix, chicory, Alfalfa (fresh ou dry), endive, dandelion leaves, clover, carrot leaves.

Exemple Daily Mix :

- 1 1/2 cups endive (chopped)
- 1 cup dry alfalfa
- 1 cup basil
- 1 cup parsley
- 1 cup watercress

*See Annex 1 for more examples.

*See Annex 2 for veggies to avoid or give with moderation.

Supplements :



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Add calcium powder every 2 meals.

Add multivitamins once a week (recommend Superveggie from Repashy)

Frequency :

Feed every day.

Hydration :

Water bowl, change water every day.

Cohabitation

This species does normally well in groups, given the space is adapted for the number of individuals. Avoid multiple males together.

Manipulation

Tortoises don't like being picked up from the ground. Interaction with the animal is best by petting the carapace and feeding them by hand (mind your fingers though!).



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Annex 1

Exemple veggie mix by Australian Reptile Park (ARP)*

Mix 1

- 2½ cups Endive – chopped
- 2½ cups Water cress – chopped
- 1 cup Carrot – grated
- 1½ cups Green Beans – chopped
- 1½ cups Zucchini – grated

Mix 2

- 2 cups Squash – grated
- 2 cups Snow Peas – chopped
- ½ cup Basil - chopped
- ½ cup Oregano – chopped
- 1 cup Corn (Kernels)
- 2 cups Bok Choy – chopped
- 3 cups Endive – chopped (can be substituted with more herbs if there is a lot of Endive in base mix)

Mix 3

- 1 cup Squash – grated
- 1 cup Endive (packed) – chopped
- 2 cups Water Cress (med packed) - chopped
- 1½ cups Parsnip (light) – grated
- 1½ cups Zucchini – grated
- ½ cup Lucerne hay - chaff or chopped up hay



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Summer Mix (Sept-May)

- ¼ cup Oregano – chopped
- ½ cup Basil – chopped
- 2½ cups Water Cress – chopped
- 2 cups Snow Peas - chopped
- ½ cup Apple – cut 0.5cm³ chunks
- 1 cup Squash - cut 0.5cm³ chunks
- 1½ cups Endive – chopped
- 1 cup Parsnip – grated
- ½ cup Lucerne Hay - chaff or chopped
up hay
- 1½ cups Green Beans - chopped

Winter Mix (June-August)

- ¼ cup Oregano – chopped
- ½ cup Basil – chopped
- 1 cup Water Cress – chopped
- 1 cups Snow Peas - chopped
- ½ cup Apple – cut 0.5cm³ chunks
- 1 cup Squash - cut 0.5cm³ chunks
- 1½ cups Endive – chopped
- 1 cup Parsnip – grated
- ½ cup Lucerne Hay - chaff or chopped
up hay
- 1½ cups Green Beans - chopped



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* Source :

<https://aszk.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Reptiles.-Indian-Star-Tortoise-2010CD.pdf>

Annex 2

“Anti-nutrients” in food

There are many naturally-occurring plant chemicals (phytochemicals) that interfere with normal absorption or use of nutrients. In small quantities, these are not harmful, but when anti-nutrient dense foods make up the bulk of an animal's diet there can be serious health consequences. Some notable “anti-nutrient” phytochemicals include the following:

Glucosinolates: Several chemicals in this group interfere with the metabolism of dietary iodine, acting as goitrogens. Goitrogens suppress thyroid gland function, and are named for an enlargement of the thyroid gland in some affected species called “goiter.” Glucosinolates are found in particularly high concentrations in many cruciferous vegetables (plants in the genus Brassica). Foods that contain significant amounts of glucosinolates include bok-choy (Chinese cabbage), broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, rutabaga, spinach, and turnip.

Oxalates: Oxalates are found in many plants, particularly of the genus Oxalis. They bind to dietary calcium, inhibiting it from being absorbed. Foods high in oxalates include beets and beet greens, broccoli, carrot, cilantro, kale, pears, spinach, strawberries, Swiss chard and tomatoes. Note that oxalates found in plants that are commonly considered irritating oral tissue (and toxic to some animals) contain oxalates in a specific structure, called raphide crystals. Some herbivores can eat these plants, however always verify with the veterinary team before introducing plants to your lizard's enclosure.

Phytates: A phosphorus-storing compound in plants, phytates will bind to calcium, zinc, iron and other minerals so that the body cannot use them, and also interferes with protein digestion. Legumes and grains are typically high in phytates.



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Tannins: These phytochemicals render protein unusable to the body. Foods containing significant levels of tannins include bananas, carrots, grapes, onions and spinach.