

Hermans Tortoise



FACT SHEET

Pictured Tortoise : **Hermans**

Genus : **Testudo hermanni**

Specie : **Chelonians**

Adult Weight : **3 - 4kg**

Adult Size : **20 - 25cm**

The average life expectancy : **70+ Years**

Social Structure : **Pairs or groups in captivity**

Enclosure : **Vivarium or tortoise table**

Temperature : **21c in cold side of habitat and 27c**

in hot end of habitat

Food type : **Herbivore, Green Veg, High Calcium, Low phosphorus, also needs Multivitamin supplements & Minerals.**

Drinking : **will drink from a water bowl and bathe in it must only be as deep as the height of its head**

Breeding age : **3 - 4 years**

Breeding Season : **Between May and July**

Live Birth or Eggs : **Eggs**

Number of Eggs in Clutch : **2 - 12**

Time to Hatch / incubation period : **90 Days**

HANDLING

Always before and after handling clean your hands with an antibacterial wash/solution as a tortoise's mouth has bacteria such as salmonella which can transfer to people known as zoonosis. When handling a tortoise remember it can bite at anytime, there are many ways to approach and pick up the tortoise.

They are very strong hard and robust reptiles but you must still NEVER pick one up by the external limbs (legs, head or tail)

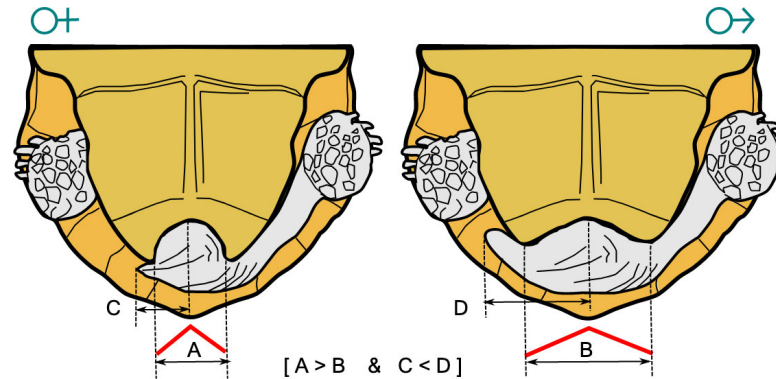
The 2 simple ways are to lift with a hand placed each side of its shell of a slightly larger tortoise, if is a small tortoise you can do this with one hand I'm you can firmly secure when lifting. The other is to slide your hand under the tortoise and lift directly upwards

SEXING YOUR HERMANS TORTOISE

The temperature of the eggs during incubation determines the sex of the hatchlings.

MALE : Hatchling temp 26c

FEMALE : Hatchling temp 30c



FEEDING

Tortoise require vegetation as they are herbivores, You will need to add extra supplements for vitamin D and calcium. They need a fresh water source that will need to be monitored and cleaned/replaced daily.

HOUSING & HUSBANDRY

VIVARIUM : A wooden vivarium is better than glass as it keeps heat in better. Do not place the vivarium in direct sunlight or in an area where there is lots of traffic as this can agitate the tortoise. place it somewhere calm and undeterred and excluded from drafts.

When buying a vivarium you need to make sure that you make a balanced habitat. You will need a large vivarium include lots or rocks and terrain try to keep fake plants to a minimum if any as you do not want the tortoise to eat them as this could impact his digestive system. The tortoise will patrol and radiate its heat. The Vivarium needs more width than height Start with a 24 - 36" long vivarium for a youngster and upgrade to a 60+" long or larger as the tortoise grows.

SUBSTRATE : The substrate used in the vivarium should preferably be reptile desert sand, **DO NOT USE** substrates containing **CEDAR** as it is toxic to nearly all reptiles.

HEATING : A vivarium needs to have a hot end of (27c) and a cold end (21c) this is so it will move around to regulate its temperature with a hide at both ends and water preferably in the middle this will provide a hiding spot at both ends and the water in the middle with ventilation to create and provide humidity (45-50%) also required by the tortoise. The temperature is to be controlled by a stat, There are different types of stats for different heating equipment. Ceramics, heat mat, heat coils. **basking heat bulbs** is the preferred method.

Some stats have a time function this can allow you to program night time temperatures which are 4-5c cooler than daytime temperatures. otherwise the stat will have temperature dial which you can change manually and should be checked daily. If too high the glass will have water humidity at all times which is bad for the python and can case respiratory issues. Ventilation is a must also to stop high humidity levels

LIGHTING :

if you have this on a timer you can also set your day and night time for your UV bulb or spotlight bulb to simulate day and night on a period of 12 hours on and 12 hours off although it is not required to help digest its food. Excessive lighting can upset your royal python as they are a nocturnal reptile.

HEALTH CHECK

Always check your Tortoise as much as possible to ensure a healthy companion, here is a list of checks to do to maintain a health animal.

Eyes : make sure they are clear black and have a shine to them.

Nose : Make sure they are breathing through their nose not mouth and that it is clear not runny discharge.

Mouth : Make sure the jaw is aligned and if experienced open the mouth to make sure all is bright pink and no abyss or saliva dripping from the mouth.

Ears : Located behind the mouth, make sure is clean and not swollen or bulging.

Anus & Genitals : Check for discharge and inflammation

Hibernation

Tortoise will hibernate for several months over the winter and longer as they age. their heart and breathing will slow down. you should only ever let a healthy tortoise with enough body reserves hibernate through the winter or it will die. if you are unsure check with a qualified reptile vet and so you know the correct procedure to initiate hibernation and how to bring it to an end.

They should be kept in adequate insulated accommodation at a temperature of 5c and never reach freezing point. keep a thermometer in place at all times so you can monitor.

Cleaning

Water: Every day water should be changed and the bowl cleaned, as the Tortoise likes to bathe in its water bowl and may defecate in it.

Bedding: should be changed as and when required as again it may dedicate and urinate and this can give off a nasty odour.

Cleaning: always make sure you use reptile friendly chemicals if required. like "Repti-clean" or an anti-bacterial detergent that is reptile safe

Requirements & Equipment when purchasing

Vivarium + correct size for tortoise, Heating controller, Heating Source for day and night if required. water bowl. UV light and controller, Decor - Vines, plants & hides, A care booklet with this relevant information.

Owning a Herman's Tortoise

You do not need a licence to purchase a tortoise, You do have to be 18 to purchase any animal in the uk. Law states under the animal welfare act 2006 that it is your duty to care for your animal in all circumstances. Provide the animal with correct living conditions and accommodation & to provide fresh food and waters and when required. If the reptile were to become ill or injured it is your responsibility to seek veterinary / expert help to assure that the Reptile will recover.

One of the leading Reptile vets in the UK is called John Chitty and he can be contacted VIA the link <http://antonvets.co.uk/exotics/189-2/>

Many species of reptiles are also covered under various European and international laws, such as the Berne Convention and CITES regulations which are designed to protect endangered animals and prohibit trade in wild-caught specimens. A Hermans Tortoise is under this Law

Only tortoises seem to be affected by URTDs (Upper Respiratory Tract Disease) listed below

Viruses, Bacteria, Fungi, Stress, Poor Husbandry such as low temps or poor diet.

Disease / Disorder	Cause	Visual Signs / Symptoms	Treatment / Prevention
Herpesvirus	Exposed to different species of tortoises or turtles, are most at risk. Stressors, crowding, inappropriate temperatures, lack of appropriate light, unsanitary practices, dehydration, poor diet, exposure to other parasites.	(Fibrinonecrotica thick of white to yellow membrane) or lesions on mouth lining, tongue & Choana. (connects windpipe between inside of mouth and nose) Won't eat, drink, has crusty nose, drooling or crusty mouth, crackling or whistle noise when breathing. swollen eyes and lack of energy.	Seek Veterinary advice
Pneumonia	unsanitary conditions, when there are increases in humidity, when the turtle is not getting proper nutrition and/or when he is experiencing a Vitamin A deficiency	Gasping Open-mouthed breathing Coughing Nasal Discharge, lethargic and uncoordinated	Seek Veterinary advice
Stomatitis	Gram-negative bacterial infection	anorexia, dulled mentation, red, inflamed and swollen gingiva, mucus or discharge from the mouth, and open-mouth breathing	Seek Veterinary advice
Metabolic bone disease	Lack of calcium and vitamin D	like a soft or misshapen shell,	Seek Veterinary advice
Dehydration	Lack of water, incorrect humidity.	Prolapse of the cloaca, bladder of the tortoise forms a "stone"	Seek Veterinary advice