



Leopard Tortoise Care Sheet

Species Name:

Stigmochelys pardalis.

Adult Size:

2-2.5ft

Lifespan:

100 Years

Breeding Age:

12-15 Years



Leopard tortoises, *Stigmochelys pardalis*, are striking reptiles native to the grasslands and savannas of eastern and southern Africa. Their distinct patterned shell resembles the rosettes of a leopard, hence the name. These tortoises are among the larger species, with adults typically reaching lengths of 10 to 18 inches and weighing up to 40 pounds. Known for their docile nature and herbivorous diet, they primarily consume grasses and leafy greens. Leopard tortoises are popular as pets due to their manageable size and relatively low maintenance requirements. However, they require a large enclosure with proper heating and lighting to thrive in captivity.

Housing:

Enclosure: As juveniles your leopard tortoise will be happy in a 3-4ft wooden vivarium or table, you will find as they get larger you may need to invest in larger housing for them typically no smaller than 6ft long.

Substrate: Dry substrates such as sand or soil can be used to mimic the tortoise's natural environment, always use reptile safe sand, ingestion of sand can cause impaction, most reptile sands are designed to be digestible in small amounts.

Temperature:

Maintain a basking spot temperature of 35°C.

Provide a gradient, with the cooler side around 29-25°C.

Use a heat source like a basking light and a heat mat for heating.

Night time temperatures can drop to 18-23°C.

Lighting:

Provide a UVB light source (10-12%) for at least 10-12 hours a day to support calcium metabolism and overall health.

Diet:

Feeding: Offer a varied diet of leafy greens, vegetables, and fruits. They will also eat commercial tortoise pellets. You can also source food from outside, weeds such as dandelions, thistle, and honey suckle are suitable in moderation. Always ensure you wash food taken from the wild before feeding to your tortoise.

Supplements:

Dust food with calcium and vitamin supplements 2-3 times a week.



Humidity and Hydration:

A humidity of 40-50% should be maintained.

Provide a shallow dish for drinking water and bathing. Tortoises can get very messy! Feel free to take them out of their vivarium and bathe them yourself, make sure the bath water only goes up to the base of the shell and don't use any soaps.

Scrub the shell gently to avoid any damage.

Enrichment and Handling:

Place hiding spots, rocks, and branches for climbing to create a stimulating environment.

Provide a secure hide for them to retreat and feel safe.

Health Considerations:

Regularly monitor for signs of illness, such as lethargy, changes in appetite, or difficulty shedding.

Quarantine new reptiles before introducing them to existing enclosures.

Remember that the care requirements for Leopard Tortoise may vary slightly based on individual needs, so observe your reptiles behaviour and make adjustments accordingly. Always prioritize the well-being and health of your pet by providing a well-maintained and enriched environment.