



Russian Tortoise

Scientific Name: Testudo horsfieldii or Agrionemys horsfieldii

Common Names: Include Russian tortoise, Afghan tortoise, steppe tortoise, central Asian tortoise, four-toed tortoise and Horsfield's tortoise.

Life Span: Around 50 years

Size: 4-8 inches

Feeding: Need a high fiber, low protein diet. Bulk should be grasses, vegetation of non-poisonous plants and weeds, and leafy greens. Small amounts of other vegetables such as squash and corn can be offered, but fruit is not tolerated well. Supplementation with calcium and vitamin B_3 powder is recommended.

Housing - Outdoors: This is a burrowing species and they will retreat to their burrows in the heat of the day and at night. This means the fence of their outdoor pet must be sunk into the ground. This species tolerates a wide range of temperatures but does not tolerate damp weather well so a dry warm retreat is necessary. Daytime temperatures should probably range in the low to mid 80s F (higher 20s C) during the day, with a drop at night. A shallow dish of water can be provided.

Housing - Indoors: This species doesn't tend to do well if indoors all the time. Provide an enclosure about 2 feet by 4 feet, with sand/soil as a substrate, ideally deep enough to allow burrowing. A basking spot at about 90 F (32 C) should be provided, with an ambient temperature as mentioned in the outdoor section. A hide box should be placed at the cooler end of the temperature gradient. A UVA/UVB producing lamp is necessary. A shallow dish of water can also be provided.

Notes: This species hibernates (only allow healthy tortoises to hibernate)