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TORTOISES AND TURTLES

Giant Asian Pond Turtle

Heosemys grandis

Heosemys grandis is one of the largest semi-aquatic turtles in South-East Asia. The shell reaches 35-48 cm and the animal can weigh up to 12 kg. The species needs a very large enclosure with both a large water area and a dry land section with hiding places, UVB and heat all year round. It does not hibernate and is critically endangered in the wild.

Family: Geoemydidae Former name: *Geoemyda grandis; Cyclemys grandis*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**35-48 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**25-30 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Semi-aquatic**
Habitat	**Rainforest and wetland**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**240 × 120 × 80 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-28 °C**
Basking spot	**30-35 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-24 °C**
Humidity	**70-90%**
Water	**Aquaterrarium** depth 35-45 cm
Water temperature	**24-28 °C**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Fruit, complete diet, plants, vertebrates and worms/snails**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**2-6 eggs**
Incubation	**105-180 days** at 28-30 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Critically Endangered (CR)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	There is only limited detailed husbandry knowledge about *Heosemys grandis*.
TEMPERATURE	The water should be 24-28 °C all year, and the air 24-28 °C during the day. The basking spot should be 30-35 °C, measured with an infrared thermometer; this figure is an estimate borrowed from related species.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	The land section should be damp, so that the animal can lie hidden in moist material, as it does in the wild. Humidity should be 70-90%; this figure is an estimate based on the habitat.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	The water is where the animal spends its time, but the species is not a strong swimmer.
LIGHTING AND UVB	UVB is necessary for vitamin D3 and calcium. The Ferguson zone is not documented for the species; zone 2 is an estimate based on the animal living in shaded swamp forests but basking.
FEEDING	*Heosemys grandis* is omnivorous: plants and fruit make up a large part of the diet, and the animal also takes worms, snails, insects, whole small fish and lean meat. It eats almost anything edible and easily becomes overweight.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Heosemys grandis* is strong, climbs well and is not an animal for handling. It rarely bites, but the beak is powerful, so watch your fingers. Pick it up by the shell with both hands, and wash your hands afterwards.
NATIVE RANGE	Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and Malaysia.