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TORTOISES AND TURTLES

Caspian Terrapin

Mauremys caspica

Mauremys caspica is a medium-sized, diurnal freshwater turtle from the Middle East and the Caucasus with distinct yellow stripes on the neck and forelegs. Shell length reaches up to 25 cm, and females are the largest. The species is hardy and tolerates both cold and polluted water, but needs a large, filtered aquaterrarium with a warm basking spot and UVB. In summer it can be kept outdoors in an enclosed pond.

Family: Geoemydidae Former name: *Testudo caspica; Clemmys caspica; Mauremys caspica caspica*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**15-25 cm** total length incl. tail
Weight	**450-650 g**
Lifespan	**15-25 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Semi-aquatic**
Habitat	**Wetland**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**130 × 65 × 65 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-29 °C**
Basking spot	**30-35 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-24 °C**
Humidity	**50-70%**
Water	**Aquaterrarium** depth 25-40 cm
Water temperature	**21-27 °C**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects, complete diet, plants, vertebrates and worms/snails**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**48-60 months**
Clutch size	**4-11 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-3**
Incubation	**65-100 days** at 27-30 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Not listed**
EU annex	**Not listed**
IUCN	**Not Evaluated (NE)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Keep the animal in a large aquaterrarium, a tub or an enclosed pond, not in an ordinary terrarium.
TEMPERATURE	The water must be 21-27 °C. The air above the water must be 24-29 °C, and the surface of the basking spot must reach 30-35 °C, measured with an infrared thermometer. At night the air may fall to 18-24 °C.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	For an aquatic turtle, air humidity matters little; 50-70 % in the room is an estimate. What is decisive is the cleanliness of the water: the animal passes droppings and food remains in the water, so it quickly becomes dirty.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	The water is the animal's home, so it must be deep, clean and relatively warm. The water must be at least twice as deep as the shell is wide, and 25-40 cm suits adults; young animals need shallower water.
LIGHTING AND UVB	UVB is a necessity: it allows the animal to produce vitamin D3, absorb calcium and develop a healthy shell. Zone 3 is suitable, because the species basks a lot and lives in open, sunny waters.
FEEDING	*Mauremys caspica* is omnivorous, but plants make up most of the adult's diet: in the wild they account for 83-100 % of the food, and the rest is fish fry, tadpoles, frogs, crustaceans, aquatic insects and their larvae, earthworms and snails.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Mauremys caspica* is diurnal and shy: it dives in a flash when disturbed. In the wild, groups of animals bask side by side on banks and drifting objects.
NATIVE RANGE	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey and Turkmenistan.