herpy

TORTOISES AND TURTLES

Painted Wood Turtle

Rhinoclemmys pulcherrima

Rhinoclemmys pulcherrima is a diurnal, colourful turtle from the Pacific side of Mexico and Central America. The shell reaches 15-20 cm in length, and the head, legs and shell have red and yellow markings. The species lives mostly on land in scrub and humid forest and is best kept in a warm, humid terrarium with a shallow water area.

Family: Geoemydidae Former name: *Emys pulcherrimus; Geoemyda pulcherrima; Callopsis pulcherrima*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**15-20 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**20-25 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial and semi-aquatic**
Habitat	**Savanna, dry forest and wetland**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**120 × 60 × 50 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**22-26 °C**
Basking spot	**32-35 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-24 °C**
Humidity	**70-90%**
Water	**Water section** depth 5-10 cm
Water temperature	**24-26 °C**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Insects, fruit, complete diet, plants and worms/snails**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**1-5 eggs**
Incubation	**100-110 days** at 26-30 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Near Threatened (NT)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Little is known about keeping *Rhinoclemmys pulcherrima*, and several figures are borrowed from related turtles with the same way of life.
TEMPERATURE	By day the terrarium should be 22-26 °C, with 32-35 °C at the basking spot. The basking spot must be open and secure, so that the animal uses it.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity should be high, 70-90 %. Mist the terrarium heavily with lukewarm water every evening, and keep the substrate moist. Glass and plants should be able to dry between mistings, while the deep substrate holds the moisture.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	The water area is a shallow tray with 5-10 cm of water and a ramp, so that the animal can easily get in and out. The temperature is 24-26 °C.
LIGHTING AND UVB	Above the basking spot there must be a UVB tube and a heat spot in the same place, so that the animal gets both heat and UVB when it basks.
FEEDING	*Rhinoclemmys pulcherrima* is omnivorous and eats with great appetite. Adults are fed two to three times a week with a mixture of about 60 % greens, 30 % fruit and vegetables and 10 % prepared turtle food.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Rhinoclemmys pulcherrima* is curious, active and not shy as long as it has hiding places. It digs down into the substrate and comes out when there is food. It likes to throw soil and sand onto its back with its forelimbs.
NATIVE RANGE	Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica.