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TORTOISES AND TURTLES

Hermann's Tortoise

Testudo hermanni

Testudo hermanni is a small, yellow and black tortoise from southern Europe and one of the most commonly kept tortoises in Europe. It belongs outdoors in summer, hibernates, lives on wild herbs and can live for many decades.

Family: Testudinidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**13-25 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**30-80 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Semi-desert and temperate woodland and meadow**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**200 × 100 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**22-30 °C**
Basking spot	**32-38 °C**
Temperature, night	**15-20 °C**
Humidity	**40-70%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Winter rest	**4-6 °C** 8-16 weeks
Diet	**Plants**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**96-144 months**
Clutch size	**1-15 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-3**
Incubation	**55-85 days** at 26-32 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex A**
IUCN	**Vulnerable (VU)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	*Testudo hermanni* belongs outdoors in the summer half of the year and does poorly in a closed glass terrarium.
TEMPERATURE	By day the temperature should be 22-30 °C, with a basking spot under a heat lamp of 32-38 °C, so that the animal can warm up to at least 30 °C. At night the temperature falls to 15-20 °C, and the heat is switched off.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	The species comes from a dry-summer climate, and humidity should be moderate: 40-70 %, highest for young animals.
LIGHTING AND UVB	*T. hermanni* is diurnal and needs UVB to produce vitamin D3 and avoid bone disease. Use a T5 tube or a powerful UVB bulb for desert species (Ferguson zone 3, about 10-12 % UVB), mounted 25-40 cm above the animal.
FEEDING	*T. hermanni* is herbivorous, and the diet must be high in fibre, low in protein and rich in calcium.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The species is calm, but not a pet to be picked up and cuddled. It learns to know its keeper and likes to come when there is food. Handle it only when necessary, and always support under the plastron.
NATIVE RANGE	Spain, France, Italy, Albania, Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece and Turkey.