herpy

TORTOISES AND TURTLES

Southeast Asian Box Turtle

Cuora amboinensis

Cuora amboinensis is a medium-sized, almost wholly aquatic turtle with a hinged plastron from the lowlands of South-east Asia. The shell grows to about 20-25 cm, and the animal can live for more than 30 years. The species requires a large, filtered tank with relatively shallow water, a warm basking spot, UVB and warmth all year round, because it never hibernates.

Family: Geoemydidae Former name: *Cistudo amboinensis; Cyclemys amboinensis* Published 16 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**18-25 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**25-38 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Semi-aquatic**
Habitat	**Rainforest and wetland**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**200 × 80 × 60 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**25-30 °C**
Basking spot	**30-35 °C**
Temperature, night	**22-25 °C**
Humidity	**60-80%**
Water	**Aquaterrarium** depth 15-25 cm
Water temperature	**25-28 °C**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Insects, complete diet, plants, vertebrates and worms/snails**
Kept	**Singly, in pairs or in groups**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**48-60 months**
Clutch size	**1-5 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-3**
Incubation	**70-100 days** at 26-30 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Keep the animal in a large aquarium or a tank, not in an ordinary terrarium.
TEMPERATURE	The water must be 25-28 °C all year round. Use a water heater with a guard and thermostat, and measure with a digital thermometer.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	The turtle's humidity is the water itself, so the relative humidity of the air is not decisive and is not documented in more detail for the species; 60-80 % in the room is suitable.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	The water is the animal's living place, so it must be clean, warm and relatively shallow. Adults thrive in 15-25 cm of water with shallower zones. The temperature is 25-28 °C.
LIGHTING AND UVB	UVB is necessary for the animal to produce vitamin D3 and absorb calcium.
FEEDING	*C. amboinensis* is omnivorous, with a predominance of plants in adults. In the wild it eats plants, fruit, seeds, fungi and worms on land, and plants, insects and molluscs in the water.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*C. amboinensis* is shy and calm and not an animal for handling. The animal withdraws into its shell and closes the plastron when startled. Pick it up by lifting the shell with both hands, and wash your hands afterwards.
NATIVE RANGE	India, Bangladesh, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Philippines.