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TORTOISES AND TURTLES

## Spanish Terrapin

# *Mauremys leprosa*

*Mauremys leprosa* is a diurnal, semi-aquatic turtle from the Iberian Peninsula, southern France and north-western Africa. The shell is typically 12-18 cm long, and young animals often have clear yellow and red markings. The species tolerates many kinds of water and needs a large, filtered aquarium or a secure outdoor pond with a basking area and UVB.

Family: Geoemydidae  Former name: *Emys leprosa; Clemmys leprosa*  Published 16 November 2026

### KEY FACTS

#### THE ANIMAL

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| Adult size | **12-21 cm**<br>total length incl. tail |
| Lifespan | **20-30 years** |
| Active | **By day** |
| Lifestyle | **Semi-aquatic** |
| Habitat | **Wetland** |
| Difficulty | **Intermediate** |

#### CARE

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| Min. enclosure | **150 × 60 × 60 cm**<br>L × W × H for 1 adult |
| Temperature, day | **22-28 °C** |
| Basking spot | **30-35 °C** |
| Temperature, night | **15-20 °C** |
| Humidity | **50-80%** |
| Water | **Aquaterrarium**<br>depth 30-35 cm |
| Water temperature | **20-26 °C** |
| UVB | **Essential**<br>Ferguson zone 3 |
| Diet | **Insects, complete diet, plants, vertebrates and worms/snails** |
| Kept | **Singly or in pairs** |

#### BREEDING

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| Reproduction | **Egg-laying** |
| Clutch size | **3-16 eggs** |
| Incubation | **65-75 days**<br>at 27-30 °C |

#### PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

## Care at a glance

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| **THE ENCLOSURE** | Keep the animal in an aquarium, a large tub or a secure outdoor pond, not in an ordinary terrarium. |
| **TEMPERATURE** | The surface of the basking spot should be 30-35 °C, measured with an infrared thermometer a couple of hours after the lamps are switched on, and the air in the room 22-28 °C by day. |
| **HUMIDITY AND WATER** | The turtle's humidity is the water itself, so the relative humidity of the air is not documented in detail for the species; 50-80 % in the room is plenty. |
| **WATER AND WATER QUALITY** | The water is the animal's living space, so it must be deep and clean. The water depth must be at least 1.5 times the shell length, and 30-35 cm suits adults. The temperature is 20-26 °C (see Temperature). |
| **LIGHTING AND UVB** | UVB is a necessity. Use a T5 HO tube with a reflector over the basking spot, so that the animal gets UVB when it dries off. |
| **FEEDING** | In the wild, *M. leprosa* eats a mixture of plants and animals: filamentous algae, aquatic plants, insect larvae, earthworms, snails, tadpoles and small amphibians, and it readily takes carrion. |
| **BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING** | *M. leprosa* is diurnal and shy in the wild: it dives at the slightest disturbance, but curiosity often makes it poke its head up after a moment. Most animals do not like being touched. |
| **NATIVE RANGE** | Spain, Portugal, France, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Mauritania and Western Sahara. |