

TUNISIAN SPUR-THIGHED TORTOISE

(*FURCULACHELYS NABEULENSIS*)

CONSERVATION STATUS: VULNERABLE*

WE ARE REPTILES
with a lifespan of 80-100 years



Origin: Tunisia and Algeria.
Diet: In the wild their diet consists of mainly coarse shrubs, cacti, grasses and weeds. They do not eat fruit and vegetables should be given sparingly. They are strictly herbivores.
Predators: Rats, foxes and birds of prey. They are also at risk of disease and tick infestations.
Habitat: In areas with hot summers, moist or dry areas, hillsides and light woodland.

*The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 1996
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Height less than
13cm adult males **16.5cm** adult females



Weight less than
200g

DID YOU KNOW?

The thickened horny or bony plate on a tortoise's shell is known as a scute. Tunisian spur-thighed tortoises are very small with beautiful shells, pale yellow with striking black dots in the centre of the scutes. They have 5 claws on their front feet and 4 claws on their back feet. The record for the oldest living Tunisian Spur-thighed Tortoise is 165 years. They cannot swim. Tortoises can almost always get back up themselves when they fall onto their backs. They should be allowed time to learn this so they do not become reliant on help. Tortoises sometimes shed their skin on their head, neck, legs and tail.

REPRODUCTION

Males attract the females by opening their mouths and showing them their red tongues and make a squeaking sound. One successful mating will allow the female to have 1-3 eggs. This can happen once or twice a year. One to two weeks before egg laying, the female will become very agitated and start digging in the mud, maybe even eating the mud in order to find a good egg laying spot. One to two days before egg laying the female may become aggressive and dominant in behaviour so that she is not disturbed during egg laying. Most females will lay eggs in one clutch, but some take up to two months to lay all their eggs. After an incubation period of around 60 days, the eggs will begin to hatch and the young are relatively mobile and active soon after hatching. They take roughly 5 years to reach full growth.

PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE TORTOISES