



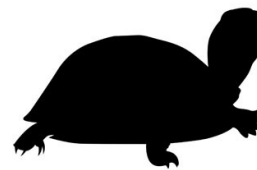
# Red Eared Slider Turtle

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## FUN FACT!

A popular pet, the red-eared slider is one of the most readily available turtle species. They are a larger turtle, sometimes reaching 1ft long and are capable of living 20 years or more. They love to eat and are usually quite active. Most red-eared slider turtles are captive bred in the southern United States.



## General Diet

Red-eared sliders are omnivores. In the wild, these turtles will eat vegetation, fish and insects. There are aquatic turtle diets that are readily available, in stick and pellet form. This diet can be supplemented with sliced or shredded vegetables such as yellow squash, carrots, yams, zucchini as well as dark leafy greens (spinach, kale, dandelion greens, green or red leaf lettuce and romaine lettuces.) Iceberg lettuce should not be offered as it provides no nutritional value. Feeder fish (comets or tuffies) are suitable as well, but should not be the sole diet. Freeze dried insects and live crickets may be given as treats. Food should be offered daily.



## **Vitamins/Supplements**

### **Housing**

Red-eared slider turtles benefit from having a large enclosure. The minimum recommended size cage for one juvenile red-eared slider turtle would be a 40 gallon breeder tank. As your turtle(s) get larger, you should upgrade to a larger sized tank. It is recommended to use a screen cover to prevent lighting from falling into the tank. The tank should be deep enough that you can have a landing for the turtle to sun on and warm up on, but also still have enough water for the turtle to stand on his rear feet with his head barely above water. It is imperative that your turtle has enough room to freely swim around in the water.

Reptiles are ectotherms, which means they get their heat from an outside source, unlike humans who can make their own heat. Red-eared slider turtles need both heat and UVB. UVB is important for both bone and shell growth. It's important to make sure you choose the proper UVB for your turtle's setup. UVB should be run for 12 to 14 hours.

Different areas of the habitat should be at different temperatures, so reptiles can move around to heat up or cool off. Red-ear sliders are comfortable with a daytime temperature in the basking area of the habitat of 85 to 90 degrees. In the cooler end of the enclosure, a daytime temperature of 75 to 80 degrees and an overall nighttime temperature of 70-75 is recommended. With larger enclosures, ceramic heat emitters may be needed for a heat source. If the place you live gets too cold at night, use a lower wattage heat emitter or nighttime bulb (which does not give off much light) to keep the temperature correct.

The water in the turtle's enclosure should also be heated. The ideal water temperature is between 70 and 85. It is recommended to use a water heater with a guard to protect it from breaking or using a heater made of thermal plastic.

### **Sanitation/General Care**

Do a partial water change (up to 50%) once a month, or more frequently if necessary. Doing a gravel vacuum on the substrate used on the bottom should be done as often as needed, and this will depend on habitat size and your pet's size, but no less than once a month. We will be happy to recommend how often your set up should be cleaned out.

### **General Maintenance**

Be sure the habitat is at the right temperature at all times, as a chilled reptile will not eat well or at all and may get sick. Change the reptile full spectrum light as often as recommended by the manufacturer, usually every six months to a year. Although the bulb may still be working, it will lose its potency over a certain period of time and, for example, may not be giving off enough UVB to be effective for calcium absorption and health.



## Health Care

Red ear slider turtles are usually healthy animals. However, upper respiratory infections can occur if temperatures are not kept at proper levels. Regularly check your turtle's enclosure to ensure that the temperatures are correct and that the UVB strength is still proper for your turtle. UVB is important because without it, a turtle is likely to get shell rot and this can be fatal.

A healthy turtle will have clear, bright eyes with no discharge and a clear nose with no discharge. A healthy turtle will be active and alert.

## Special Section


Reptiles can carry one disease that can be transmitted to people called salmonellosis. This disease is usually caught by people after they eat undercooked eggs or meat, but reptiles can give it to people as well. Although it is rare for a reptile to carry this disease, it is always important to wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after you have handled your pet or anything in your pet's cage. Keep your pet out of the kitchen area and do not allow very small children to handle any reptiles. Taking just a few precautions will keep the chances of catching this disease to an absolute minimum.

## SUPPLIES CHECKLIST

Reptile UVB Bulb	Dock or Landing for Basking
Heat Lamp with Heat Emitter or Daylight Heat Bulb	
2nd Heat Lamp Night Bulb	
Water Conditioner	
Screen Cover	
Recommended Substrate	
Cage/Terrarium 36"x18" or Larger	
Thermometer/Humidity Gauge	



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