

Red-Footed Tortoise

Scientific Name: *Chelonoidis carbonaria*

Class: Reptilia

Order: Testudines

Family: Testudinidae



The average adult carapace is 10 to 13 inches long with a record length of 17-3/4 inches. The carapace is black (occasionally dark brown) with yellow to reddish orange vertebral areas. A light spot of the same color occurs at the base of each marginal. Distinct curving of the sides give a waist-line look. The plastron is yellowish brown with some dark pigment along the mid-transverse seams. Some males will be very dark within the concave portion. The anterior surface of the limb is covered with large red non- or slightly

overlapping scales. The color may vary from deep scarlet to orange and even yellow in some specimens.

Range

Their range is northern and central South America.

Habitat

They inhabit humid forest and moist savannas.

Gestation

Incubation: 105 to 202 days

Litter

Clutch: 5-15 eggs

Behavior

Red-footed tortoises are quiet intelligent, have great memory skills, and quickly learn when and where food is available, or where shelter and basking is found. They have a strong sense of smell, and their sense of touch is excellent even to the slightest contact.

Reproduction

Breeding season is usually July to September in the wild, but in captivity, they breed all year. Males use head movements (a series of jerks away from the back to mid position – first to one side then the other) to distinguish themselves from other males. They will sniff the female's cloaca to determine if it is the same species. Ramming and pushing may be used to subdue the female. Females will dig a flask-like cavity approximately 8 inches deep to deposit the eggs, which are elongated with brittle shells.

Wild Diet

Grasses, succulent fallen fruit, occasional carrion.

Zoo Diet

Endive, spinach, carrots, grapes, bananas, leafeater diet