

Malaysian Giant Turtle

Scientific Name: *Orlitia borneensis*

Class: Reptillia

Order: Testudines

Family: Geomydidae



The Malaysian Giant Turtle is the largest freshwater turtle found in Southeast Asia, growing to 28-32 inches in carapace (upper shell) length and can reach a weight of 110 pounds. It has a large broad head and a hard shell. The first vertebral scute (hard keratinous sections that make up the outer shell layer) is shaped like a mushroom. The carapace is low, smooth, oval, with four pairs of costals, oval and uniformly dark gray, brown or black. The snout with a slightly hooked upper jaw projects a bit. Large scales run in a strip between the tympanum and eye and there are granular scales on the back of the uniformly brown-black head. They lack large scales on their fore legs and have large webbed

feet which resemble paddles with long thick claws, similar to other river turtles. The head is dark, usually with a white spot below and behind the angle of the jaws. Male tails are longer and thicker than female tails. Adults are uniformly blackish-grey dorsally, with a yellowish to brownish-cream underside. Juveniles are brown above, yellow below.

Range

They range across the Malaysian Peninsula, Sumatra and Borneo.

Habitat

These turtles live in large rivers, streams, lakes, swamps, marshes and surrounding lands.

Litter

Females lay between 12-15 eggs at a time.

Behavior

They spend much time basking in the sun near the waters' edge and eat in both water and on land.

Gestation

It takes anywhere from 80 to 90 days for the eggs to hatch and varies dependent on the warmth of the nest where they were laid.

Reproduction

This species nests on river banks and river islands. females laying their eggs in piles of debris or buried in dirt or sand in a sunlit area. Eggs are brittle and ellipsoidal (about 80 x 40 mm.) Hatchlings are about 60mm long with very rugose carapaces and sharply serrated posterior marginals. Specific Information regarding sexual maturity and egg incubation time for Malaysian Giant Pond Turtles was not found, but that presented is from general information about amphibious turtles.

Wild Diet

They are omnivorous and feed on fruit, aquatic plants, and small animals with a preference for fish.