

Care & Information Sheet

Asian Box Turtle

Cuora spp



Asian box turtles like the water and some can even swim for short distances. There are two types of Asian box turtles, the Malayan and the Chinese. Box turtles have two separate shells joined together on their sides. These turtles can completely enclose themselves in their shell when they feel threatened. With lots of gentle handling they can learn to recognize their owner. Never shake or hold them upside down. Do not house males together. The average size is 5 to 12 inches and with proper care and nutrition they can live 40 or more years.

Habitat

- A glass aquarium 10 to 40 gallons that allows for easy movement.
- Substrate – Use pelleted mulch, a moss-type substrate that can retain moisture. Some turtles will eat their substrate so you may have to switch to paper or cage carpet.
- Humidity – 70-90% use a mist spray or humidifier. Because they are semi aquatic the enclosure should contain water deep enough for the turtle to submerge halfway.
- Temperature – Daytime 75-85F, basking up to 95F, nighttime 70-76F.
- Lighting – Provide UVB rays with full spectrum fluorescent lighting for 12 to 14 hours a day.

Food & Water

- Asian Box Turtles need a variety in their diet, high in fiber and calcium and low in fat and protein. Waxworms, Mealworms, Earthworms and Crickets along with grasses, vegetables and fruits. (Timothy Hay, Kale, Mustard Greens, Squash, Carrots, Zucchini, Berries, Peaches and Bananas)
- Juveniles will eat more insects while adults are mostly vegetarians.
- Feed insects every other day. Fruits and Vegetables should be offered daily and chopped into small pieces.
- Add a calcium and vitamin/mineral supplement to food 1 to 3 times a week.
- Remove left over food after 24 hours.
- Provide fresh, clean filtered, chlorine-free water daily.

Maintenance

- Scoop feces out of the substrate every other day.
- Thoroughly clean the tank once a week. Set turtle aside in a secure habitat, scrub the habitat and furnishings with a 3% bleach solution, rinse thoroughly with water, removing all smell of bleach. Dry the tank and furnishings and add clean substrate.

Supplies

Habitat & Screen Lid	Water Dish	Full Spectrum UVB Light
Substrate	Food Dish	Undertank Heater
Hiding Place	Calcium & Vitamin/Mineral Supplements	Humidity/Thermometer Gauge
Quality Food	Incandescent Light or Ceramic Heater	Book about Asian Box Turtles

Health

Because turtles are potential carriers of infectious diseases and salmonella, always wash your hands before and after handling your turtle and/or the habitat contents to help prevent the potential spread of diseases.

If you notice any of the following signs, check habitat temperature and humidity levels, ensure habitat is clean and water and food is available. If everything appears OK you should consult with an exotic animal veterinarian for advice.

- Metabolic Bone/Vitamine Deficiency – Inability to absorb calcium due to insufficient UVB light. Untreated can lead to softened bones, deformities, swollen limbs and lethargy. Provide ample UVB lighting.
- Respiratory Disease – Labored breathing and runny nose. Can be caused by cold, damp habitat. Ensure habitat is appropriately heated.
- Shell Rot/Ulcers – Lesions on the shell caused by an unclean habitat or improper diet. Can become infected. Daily Cleanings, diet changes and antibiotics.
- Ticks and Mites – Parasites on the skin.

For information regarding asian box turtles & disease, contact the Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets>

NOTE: The information contained in this document is for general reference only. Please consult a veterinarian for medical advice and concerns.

Sources:

Box Turtles by Richard D. Bartlett & Patricia Pope Bartlett
The Box Turtle Manual by Philippe De Vosjoli & Roger Klingenberg
Tortoises and Box Turtles Complete Owners' Manual by Hartmut Wilke