



Amazing Animals Fact sheets

Tortoises and Turtles

Turtles and Tortoises are common name for reptiles that make up the order Chelonia, (also known as Testudines), recognized by a hard shell that encloses the internal organs of the body. Turtles are ancient life forms. The earliest fossils recognized as turtles date from the Triassic period, about 200 million years ago; thus, turtles were in existence prior to the emergence of the great dinosaur groups. Unlike dinosaurs, however, turtles have continued to adapt and flourish.

centimetres long with soft shells. They are very prone to predation at this stage.

Australia Zoo Aldabran Tortoise profiles



Aldabran Tortoise

The Aldabran Tortoise is the largest species of land tortoise in the world. They can grow to roughly 1 metre tall and can weigh as much 300 kilograms. Their shell is grey in colour with dark grey to almost black coloured head and legs.

Habitat

These giant tortoises inhabit the islands of Aldabra, situated off the east coast of Africa, in the Indian Ocean. These islands are rough and rocky and have limited vegetation.

Diet

The Aldabran Tortoise is herbivorous and will eat grasses, shrubs, flowers and leaf litter. They will also eat cactus and lichen.

Breeding

The Aldabran Tortoise will reach sexual maturity at about 20-25 years of age. Mating season is between February and March and the males will let out a loud bellowing sound to entice the female to mate with him. After mating, the female buries 10-20 spherical eggs in the sand or soil where they are incubated by the heat of the sun for two months. The hatchlings are only about 6

Igloo

Igloo can be identified by his large, round shell (thus giving him his name), but this is not the only way to identify him; his personality and the way he decides to do something make him the odd one out of the three Aldabran boys. When Igloo wants a drink, he does not just lap at the water; he climbs into the whole pond. When Igloo wants something to eat, he is not satisfied with a handful of vegetables; he wants the whole bucket full. So when Igloo decides he wants to do something, there simply is no stopping a determined 120kg tortoise called Igloo!

Threatened Species!

Tortoises and Turtles are facing extinction within the next fifty years.

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