

## Egyptian Tortoise

Testudo kleinmanni, Leith's tortoise



These exceedingly rare, cute little tortoises are the smallest Mediterranean species, they are fascinating tortoises preferring a drier habitat overall.

**Size** Males reaching 3-4 inches and females around 4-5 inches.

**Natural range** Originating in coastal areas of Egypt and Libya and unfortunately in great decline, critically endangered.

**Diet** Kleinmanni thrive on a strictly herbivorous diet including some dry plants and blooms. (See our herbivore diet sheet)

**Indoor Enclosure** We have set up a typical tortoise table with multiple hides some live plants and installed a small fogging system so that once a day in the morning we run set up on a timer for 30 mins only to replicate the coastal breezes that they would experience in their natural habitat. This allows them to dry out again as the day progresses. A water dish is always available.

**Substrate** We have found that a calcium grit base works well for our Kleinmanni tortoises. Its clean, dust free and stays dry for them. If they happen to eat any its calcium so not a problem, some folks use various mixes and seem to do well also.

**Temperature** Basking 100-110F. Ambient temperatures between 75-85F and a cooler night are natural for this species.

**Outdoors** We only allow them out on nice dry sunny days-they are sensitive to humidity and can easily chill, so we are especially cautious with this species but still feel that some access to the real sun is greatly beneficial for their health. They do enjoy nibbling on grasses, weeds and flowers and appear to enjoy their outdoor excursions.

**Behaviour** Can be sensitive to change but we personally have found them to be very predictable once they adjust to their environment. They are very routine oriented little tortoises and not a species for beginners due to their sensitivity. One keeper explained to me that one of their kleinmanni didn't eat for several days following changes made to their enclosure. Their grumpy looking little faces are simply adorable. As babies these are no larger than a grape. We do hope the number of these will continue to increase in captivity as they are critically endangered in their natural range.



*Written by Louise Bonser*

**Prairie Hills Tortoises**