

Pancake Tortoise

Malacochersus tornieri



Not commonly seen, an attractive, interesting flat soft shelled African tortoise.

Size 6-7 inches in length but barely 1.5 inches high

Natural Range Originating from Tanzania and Kenya. Sadly, these tortoises are in rapid decline in their relatively small, localised geographic areas.

Diet They enjoy grazing in the summer enjoying a herbivorous diet (see our herbivore diet sheet.)

Indoor Enclosure Active agile tortoises who just love to climb, add some rocks and be as creative as you wish, and these little tortoises will have fun scrambling over the terrain.

Substrate We use fine coco coir and chunky coir or bark on top, they like to hide and feel secure too so provide areas for retreats. They prefer a drier habitat but its good to offer some humidity in some hides to replicate the higher humidity they would find in the natural rock crevices in their natural habitat.

Temperature Provide a basking temperature of 100F and try not to let temperature drop much below 74F. Provide a high output UV and a 12-hr photoperiod.

Outdoor enclosure A rocky terrain and access to real sunlight and natural grazing will be appreciated by these fascinating tortoises. Provide hides so they can retreat during the hottest parts of the day.

Remember they are very agile and can climb well so be mindful of this when constructing a safe outdoor area.

Behaviour They inhabit rocky crevices known as kopjes and tightly wedge themselves in for safety and shelter. Faced with danger they can run surprisingly quickly and probably a good thing as they lack the toughened shell of most species. We find them to be a curious species and would not describe them as shy.

Agile tortoises who have no problem climbing and righting themselves if flipped over. They lay usually one (Rarely 2) large egg comparative to their size with a varying incubation period of 6 mths and even up to 12 mths.



Written by Louise Bonser

Prairie Hills Tortoises