

GREEK TORTOISE

(*Testudo graeca*)

NONNATIVE



Description: Medium sized turtle (up to 12 inches long) with a round and very domed carapace, which is flared in the rear. The carapace color varies from completely gray or black to yellow or tan with black blotches. Each hind leg has a very large, horny spur-like projection giving it the nickname 'Spur-thighed' tortoise. Each front foot has five claws.

Habitat: Completely terrestrial, native to the Mediterranean region, including north Africa, Romania and Bulgaria, and east through Israel to Russia and Iran.

Behavior: Herbivorous. Mostly active at dawn and dusk, it digs burrows or pallets to avoid extreme heat. Depending on temperatures, will hibernate in winter. Very popular in the European pet trade, listed as threatened in several European countries.

If you find one: If you find a Greek tortoise, it is a captive turtle that has either escaped or has been unlawfully released. For the benefit of the animal, please contact the [nearest Game and Fish office](#) or the Phoenix Herpetological Society for information and recommendations.



One enlarged scale on each hind leg