

**RANGE**

Southeast Asia

**HABITAT**

Deciduous forest, dry savannahs, semi-arid grasslands. Also in human-altered habitats including waste areas, deserts, scrub lands, plantations.

**SIZE**

Males are about 6 inches long. Females are much larger than males with broader shells. They are about 10 inches long. Hatchlings are 32 to 40 mm long. Eggs are about 1.8 inches long and 1.4 inches wide.

**LIFE EXPECTANCY**

At least 75 years.

**REPRODUCTION**

Star tortoises reach sexual maturity at about 10 to 15 years of age. Mating occurs during the rainy season (mid-June to mid-October). Females lay 3 to 6 eggs which incubate 47 to 147 days. They may lay 2 to 3 clutches per year.

**DIET**

Chiefly herbivorous. Requires a coarse high fiber diet. Likes water more than any other species of this genus.

**Wild:** Eats grass, vegetation, fallen fruit or flowers, and occasionally snails.

**Zoo:** Mixed herb diet: chopped greens, carrots, assorted vegetables, etc. Occasionally have a protein supplement of "super mealworms."

**BEHAVIOR**

- Males may attempt to turn each other over on their backs during breeding season.
- Females urinate on sand as she excavates nest.
- Like to soak in shallow water.
- Most feeding and mobility takes place in the early morning and late afternoon.
- May hide under bushes or tufts of grass.

**POINTS OF INTEREST**

- Egg shells are very hard, dotted with numerous widely spaced pores.
- Hatchlings lack "star" marks on shell.
- There are 2 distinct color variations: orange with yellow vertebral stripe and yellow form without stripe.
- It is the smallest *Geochelone* species.

**STATUS**

Was once one of the most familiar tortoises in captivity, but quite rare now because it is eaten by local people and it is susceptible to pneumonia and other respiratory diseases.

**REFERENCES**

Star Tortoise - [http://www.honolulu zoo.org/star\\_tortoise.htm](http://www.honolulu zoo.org/star_tortoise.htm)

Indian Star Tortoises - <http://www.tortoisetrust.org/care/celegans.html>

**PHOTO  
COMING  
SOON**

*photo:*

Order:	<b>Testudinata</b>
Family:	<b>Testudinidae</b>
Genus:	<b>Geochelone</b>
Species:	<b>elegans</b>