

RIO GRANDE TURTLE & TORTOISE CLUB

www.rgttc.org

Definitions and Important Information

You will see references to “enclosure”, “shelter”, “substrate” and so on used throughout the adoption documents. As a general guideline, we offer the following information for your consideration:

Indoors:

Enclosure – Large Rubbermaid© or similar container or wooden structure similar to a bookcase laid on its back with shelving removed.

Substrate – Bed-A-Beast, top soil mixed with play sand, cypress mulch.

Shelter – Hide box made from scrap lumber, a hollow log, roofing tile, half of a large terra-cotta plant container, etc.

Heating – Infrared ceramic bulbs, 60-100 watt incandescent bulbs in clamp lights.

Lighting – Full spectrum fluorescent bulbs, Active UVB lamps.

Outdoors:

Enclosure – A well-protected predator and escape-proof area may be constructed of wood, cement blocks, metal siding and various other means.

Substrate – Turtles and tortoises love to dig to escape the heat of the day, to lay eggs and to hibernate. They need lots of well aerated soil mostly along the borders of their enclosure/yard. They prefer to burrow near walls, boulders, patios, etc. They thrive in a well-planted, fungicide and pesticide-free environment.

Shelter – See Indoors above.

Heating – Most box turtles self-regulate their temperature and hibernate underground in the winter. Some species of tortoises do not hibernate and require somewhat elaborate outdoor habitats in order to survive. You will be given information pertinent to the animal you will be adopting.

Lighting – Again, most turtles and tortoise self-regulate but the non-hibernating chelonians require special lighting.

Water is a crucial part of raising a healthy, happy turtle or tortoise. They must be provided with fresh water daily. Depending on the size of your animal, a plastic plant saucer works well in most instances. Larger species require considerably more imagination in the container department and can vary from 50 gal. trash can lids to elaborate ponds.

Information on the diet your animal will require will be provided to you in advance of your receipt of the turtle or tortoise.

Basic Water Turtle Setup

A minimum indoor setup for a small turtle consists of:

- 20 gallon aquarium or similar container (a 10 gallon tank is too small for anything but a hatchling turtle!!) The water must be deep enough for the turtles to completely submerge themselves and swim freely.
- A submersible filtration system that is strong enough for a tank that size.
- An aquarium heater to heat water to about 78-82F, depending on turtle.
- A lamp, with a 40-60W incandescent light bulb, installed to warm the basking/land area to 85-90 degrees (or a ceramic bulb for a larger basking area and tank) at the warmest spot.
- A UVA/UVB producing fluorescent light.
- Land area, built from bricks, rocks or wooden boards where the turtle can easily climb out, walk around and get completely dry.
- A floating aquarium thermometer (not those digital strips; they are not accurate) to verify all the temperatures.
- A place to set up the tank away from direct sunlight.

Again, thank you for being part of the worldwide effort to provide quality homes for our shelled friends.

If you have any questions whatsoever, please do not hesitate to contact us. The only “stupid” question is the one that goes unasked.



Rio Grande Turtle and Tortoise Club Adoption Application

P.O. Box 20836
Albuquerque, NM 87154-0836

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State Zip: _____

Daytime Ph: (____) _____ - _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ - _____

Type of Residence: Apartment House Townhouse

Email: _____

As with any Adoption, it is important to research the needs and requirements of the specific animal in order to maintain its health and wellbeing in a Safe and Secure environment. You should do your research before you adopt. We have enclosed a list of *Resource Material* you may find useful.

Some basic facts about turtles and tortoises (chelonians):

- 1) They Do Not make good pets for children. They do not like to be picked up and played with. Children must be constantly supervised when in the presence of chelonians.
- 2) They Do Not get along well with dogs and most cats. No dog should be left in the same space as a chelonian without Constant supervision. Turtles are not chew toys.
- 3) Land turtles and tortoises are not good swimmers and barriers need to be in place to prevent access to a pool or deep pond.
- 4) Chelonians live a very long time. Some live over 100 years. They are not disposable pets.
- 5) They get sick the same as any other animal. The average Exotic veterinarian charges between \$40 and \$100 per visit plus medications.
- 6) Turtles and tortoises are great escape artists. Some are exceptional climbers and some can burrow under a wall in no time flat. You will have a "home visit" prior to placing an animal with you so we may offer suggestions on how to make your yard as escape-proof as possible.
- 7) Some chelonians hibernate during the winter and some do not. You must provide adequate accommodations in either case depending on the species of chelonia you adopt. Shelter from the heat of summer, bitter cold of winter and a constant water supply is critical.
- 8) You are responsible for knowing your City, State and Federal laws concerning possession of any animal. You may be required to have a license or permit and pay appropriate fees.

Number of people in the home under 16 years of age: _____

Do you belong to any reptile clubs? _____

Do you have any turtles or tortoises at the present time? Yes No

If yes, which ones? (please list species, sex and approximate age, and how long you've had it):

Have you cared for Turtles / Tortoises in the past? Yes No

Please describe your experience? Where is/are the turtle/tortoise now?

Have you adopted Turtles / Tortoises in the past? Yes No

Please describe your experience? Where is/are the turtle/tortoise now?

Where will you keep your new turtle/tortoise?

Inside (temporary housing only) Describe the indoor enclosure, substrate, shelter, water, heating and lighting arrangements. _____

Outside Size of turtle/tortoise yard in sq. ft. _____

Describe your turtle / tortoise yard, include info on ground cover, hiding areas, walls/fencing:

For aquatic turtles, describe pond or aquarium setup, include size of setup, filtration method, heat sources, basking area, and UV source. _____

Do you have a dog or cat? Yes No If yes, what type: _____

Can you separate your current pets from the turtle/tortoise? Yes No

Does your gate latch securely to keep stray dogs out and turtles/tortoises safely inside? Yes No

If neighbors, meter readers, postman, leave the gate ajar what will keep the turtle/tortoise from walking out?

Please describe what will keep your turtle/tortoise from digging under the fence and getting out of your yard?

Do you have a pool or a pond? Yes No

Please describe how the land turtle/tortoise will be kept out of the pool/pond?

Do you have retaining walls or terraces that the turtle/tortoises can fall off? * Yes No

Terracing is a concern where the surface beneath a high terrace could injure a falling turtle. The response to this question will allow us to educate the applicant and recommend methods to keep the turtle safe.

Will the tortoise have sunshine, shade and dry land available? Since turtles and tortoises are cold-blooded and cannot create their own heat, they must be kept between 78-85 degrees for them to digest food. Describe where your turtle/tortoise will sleep at night:

If your turtle/tortoise is sick, injured or too thin to hibernate, are you willing to keep it inside in temporary housing as long as needed? Yes No

If leaving the home for a vacation, who will care for the turtle/tortoise in your absence?

A Reptile specialist should provide veterinary care. We can provide names of specialists in your area. What is the name of your current vet? _____

Check the type of Turtles/Tortoises you are applying for.

- Box Turtle
- Water Turtle, state species preferred _____
- Tortoise, state species preferred _____
- Other _____

Age and Gender

- Juvenile
- Adult Male
- Adult Female

By accepting this adoption application Rio Grande Turtle and Tortoise Club is not guaranteeing that a turtle or tortoise will be available for the applicant.

Considering my income and financial obligations, I accept the responsibility of paying for medical care by a reputable reptile vet for the turtle or tortoise I/we are applying for.

(signature(s))

If I can no longer provide care or wish to give up the turtle(s)/tortoise(s), I agree to return it to Rio Grande Turtle and Tortoise Club.

(signature(s))

I have read and understand this application, and by signing it, I agree to all of its terms.

(signature(s))

(date)

Rio Grande Turtle and Tortoise Club Adoption Agreement

I, _____, agree to the following:
(Please read and initial each one)

- 1) To keep the turtle for the remainder of his life. I agree to contact Rio Grande Turtle and Tortoise Club if I can no longer keep the turtle. _____
- 2) To provide the turtle with proper food, shelter and healthcare _____
- 3) To take the turtle to the vet for care when he is sick _____
- 4) To NEVER release this turtle into the wild. _____
- 5) To treat the turtle with kindness and respect, and insist anyone in my home do the same _____

The adopter releases Rio Grande Turtle and Tortoise Club of any liability in regard to the health or behavior of the turtle/tortoise adopted. As the adopter you agree not to hold Rio Grande Turtle and Tortoise Club liable for any claims of injury to property or persons or otherwise caused by the turtle/tortoise.

*YOU are responsible for knowing your state laws regarding turtle ownership.

Your signature: _____

Date: _____