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Russian tortoise



The Russian tortoise, also known as the Afghan tortoise, is a small reptile that has a life-span of up to 50 years. They are known for being easy to care for and fun exotic pets. As the name suggests, they are originally from Central Asia, mostly in Russia.

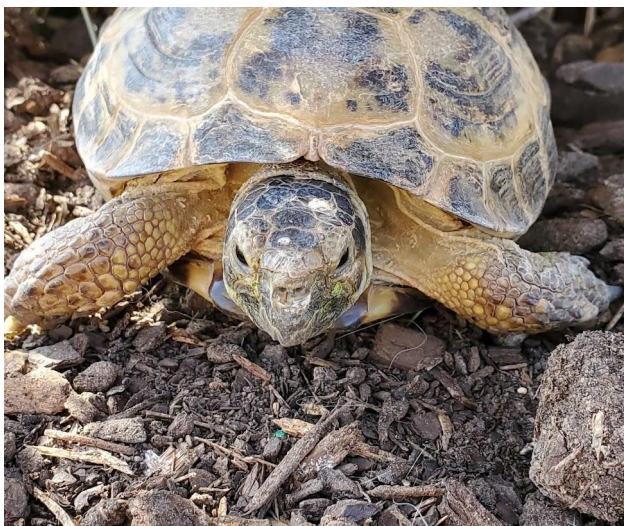
- The Russian tortoise has a round/oval shell that is 6–8 inches in length. Coloration can differ between brownish/yellowish and brownish/blackish. In many occasions they have an olive green tint to their shells, face, and stocky legs.
- Often Russian tortoises have a brown or black marking on their backs. Four claws on each foot that are made to dig, which results in it's common name, the four-toed tortoise.



Russian tortoises have a big personality. They can be described as open, vibrant, friendly, adventurous, and social, much like a dog's personality.

In their natural habitat, Russian tortoises are burrow-dwellers. They live in sandy or soil grounds in which they dig burrows 30 - 80 inches in depth. When it rains, the soil becomes soft and easy for them to dig. But if the soil hardens then it becomes impossible for the tortoises to dig. They will often go to neighboring burrows and several tortoises spend the night in a single burrow.







Despite being a popular pet, Russian tortoises are vulnerable and on the endangered species list because they are used in the pet trade. They are also used as a source of food and suffer from habitat destructions due to human activity.



You can help these magnificent creatures survive in the wild by doing easy things, sometimes even in your own backyard.

- If you see a tortoise's nest, avoid disrupting it.
- When you mow your lawn, look out for tortoises to not harm them.
- Boycott products and companies that destroy their habitats.
- Only get these animals as pets from certified breeders, and make sure you can take care of them.

References:

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- Buckley, Gabe. “Russian Tortoise.” *Biology Dictionary*, 19 July 2020, biologydictionary.net/russian-tortoise/.
- Hunter Briggs is an experienced reptile breeder who has been keeping and raising various species over the past seven years. What initially started as curiosity quickly turned into a deep passion for herpetology, et al. “Russian Tortoise Care: Diet, Size, Lifespan, Habitat...” *Reptile Direct*, 27 Feb. 2021, www.reptiledirect.com/russian-tortoise/.
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