

ANIMAL INFORMATION SHEET

Common Name – **Gulf Coast Box Turtle**
Scientific Name – *Terrapene Carolina major*
Order – Testudines Family – Emydidae



Care, feeding and handling guidelines are researched and outlined by the Association of Zoo and Aquariums, United States Fish and Wildlife and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

General Information:

Size: Up to 8 inches long

Lifespan: up to 50 years in the wild and even longer in captivity with proper care.

Wild Habitat: swamp regions and temperate forests

Diet: omnivores, they eat both plants and animal proteins like earth worms.

Indigenous Habitat: Gulf Coast Box Turtles are found around the northern regions of the Gulf of Mexico. Primarily in Florida to Louisiana and tend to be found near water, like marshes. They prefer areas with lots of ground cover to avoid predators.

Home Habitat: a large terrarium type enclosure is best, floor space is more important than height. Box Turtles like to dig; a 50/50 mix of organic mulch and potting soil is a must. They also enjoy safe plants (edible browse) and make sure a large water bowl big enough to sit in.

Recommended max time for handling: 30 minutes

Temperature Range: 55° F – 80° F

Transport: Small cooler with locking lid lined with paper and a crate cover to decrease stress for transporting to/from veterinarian or any other location. <70° F hot water bottle wrapped in towel **MUST** be placed in container.

Restraint: hold shell in the middle and support the whole body (Photo: held so people can “touch”.) It is **VERY** important to keep **ALL** turtles/tortoises level when handling. Their internal organs cannot shift so they cannot breathe when vertical.



Handling: Can become used to being touched; but **DO NOT** touch head or tails as this will cause stress.

Signs of Stress: hiding or inside shell

Vocalization: none

Interesting Facts. It is illegal in most states to remove box turtles from the wild and they have very specific home ranges and become stressed when removed from them. There are six subspecies of box turtles. With four found in the United States; two subspecies are found in Mexico.

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1. Tidewater Reptile Association at <http://www.freewebs.com/tidewaterreptileassociation/>
2. Central Virginia Reptile Rescue at <http://carmendenali79.wix.com/centralvareptilerescue>
3. For questions or concerns you may have about your pets or where to adopt contact The Bunny Hutch at Info@TheBunnyHutch.ORG or call (866) 488-4248.