

## Mediterranean Spur Thighed (or "Greek") Tortoise – Care Sheet

### Temperature

Day	24-28 °C
Basking area temperature	30-32 °C
Night	22 °C

*NB: the above temperature ranges are recommended for hatchlings and juveniles in indoor enclosures. Older Greek tortoises can be housed outside during early spring to early autumn (\*see hibernation section)*

### Substrate and humidity

50:50 organic/unfertilised top soil and play-pit sand, (soil depth: approx. height of the shell, e.g 1-2" deep for hatchlings and juveniles, >4" deep for adults).

Lightly mist substrate daily to prevent it becoming dusty, help with humidity and thermoregulation.

Change substrate every 4-6 weeks

Recommend having a hide/half log with damp sphagnum moss inside to create a humid hide area

### Food

100% of diet to be made up of tortoise-safe weeds/flowers e.g.:

- weeds: dandelion, plantain, hawksbeard, mallow, sowthistle
- flowers: pansy, campanula, forget-me-knot, african violet, hibiscus
- salad mixes (when weeds unavailable in frosty spells): Lambs leaf, Florette crispy salad mix (green or pink label).

(see 'useful websites' section for more info on what is safe to feed)

### Food supplements

¼ teaspoon of limestone/calcium supplement on food every other day (e.g. Mon/Wed/Fri)

¼ teaspoon of Nutrobal on food alternate days to limestone/calcium (e.g. Tue/Thu/Sat)

Leave one day free (e.g. Sun)

Leave Cuttlefish (whole) in the enclosure for tortoise to nibble on for extra calcium

### Water

Provide fresh water daily (in a shallow water dish that they can easily step in/out of)

### Bathing

Frequency:

0-1 year: Every other day for 10 minutes;

1-2 years: twice per week for 20 minutes;

2+ years: once a week for 30 minutes;

Shallow bath (¼ height of tortoise) in lukewarm water (30-32°C). Ideally in the morning, before food.

### Basking and UVB

UVB is vital for the health of your tortoise

- Use a combined UVA + UVB bulb for the basking area (or separate UVB tube and separate basking bulb)
- Turn on basking bulb for 12 hours per day (summer); 8 hours per day (winter\*).
- Make sure the tortoise is unable to touch the bulb to prevent burning/overheating (bulb should be approx 30cm away from top of the shell, depending on manufacturer's instructions).
- Replace bulbs every 6-12 months as UVB degrades and no longer beneficial to your tortoise

### Weighing

Weigh weekly before their bath and keep a record of the weight. Weight should gradually increase each week (e.g. 1-2g every TWO weeks, for 0-2 years).



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### Disinfectant/cleaning

Clean all feeding / drinking trays daily and enclosure weekly with hot water and tortoise-safe disinfectant (e.g. "F10 disinfectant").

### Housing/habitat

- Hatchlings/Juveniles can be housed indoors in open-topped tub with correct heating and UVB (never in a vivarium as they can overheat and have poor air quality/limited air circulation). Access to sunshine/UVB is important for their health and for growing strong bones and shell, so they should also have a suitable predator-proof outdoor enclosure when temperatures permit.
- Sub-adult/Adults will enjoy being outside in a secure/predator-proof area stocked with tortoise-safe weeds and flowers, to encourage natural grazing and give them the all-important sunshine to keep them healthy and bones/shell strong. They may require an indoor area if over-wintering or post hibernation if weather too cold (\*see hibernation section)
- *Note: Tortoises need lots of space, so allow at least 10x the length of your tortoise to calculate the length and width of the enclosure. E.g. a tortoise that's 10" long would need an enclosure that's 100"x 100" (minimum)*

### Worming

Worm your tortoise yearly or as directed by your vet.

### Vets

Make sure your vet is a reptile specialist

### Hibernation

Mediterranean spur thighed (or "Greek" tortoises) **DO** hibernate. I will be preparing hibernation videos on my YouTube channel soon. In the meantime, please refer to useful websites section for more information on how to safely hibernate your tortoise.

### Daily checklist

Below is an example of my daily routine checklist for hatchlings (excludes bathing, weighing, worming, changing substrate)

**HATCHLINGS - MORNING CHECKLIST**

Spot clean urine/faeces	
Turn basking lamp/lighting on	
Roughly chop weeds/food (bite size)	
Rinse food in clean water	
<i>**Mix in softened fibre/dried herbs/flower mix</i>	
Place food in bowl and lightly dust with Calcidust/Limestone/Nutrobal	
Put fresh water in shallow water dish	
Lightly spray substrate	
Rehydrate sphagnum moss in humid hide	

**HATCHLINGS - EVENING CHECKLIST**

Spot clean urine/faeces	
Turn basking lamp/lighting off	
Throw away uneaten food	
Remove & disinfect food/water bowls	

*\*\*I use Zoo Med Grassland Tortoise Food, pre-alpin Testudo fibre and herb mix, dried flowers/dandelions etc as additional supplement to food when natural supplies are limited, but fresh food is always best ☺*

### Useful websites

Safe plants/weeds	<a href="http://www.thetortoisetable.org.uk/site/tortoise_home_1.asp">http://www.thetortoisetable.org.uk/site/tortoise_home_1.asp</a>
Tortoise care	<a href="http://www.tortoisetrust.org/care/care.html">http://www.tortoisetrust.org/care/care.html</a> <a href="http://www.britishcheloniagroup.org.uk/">http://www.britishcheloniagroup.org.uk/</a>
Hibernation	<a href="http://www.tortoisetrust.org/articles/newhibernation.html">http://www.tortoisetrust.org/articles/newhibernation.html</a> <a href="http://www.britishcheloniagroup.org.uk/caresheets/caresheets">http://www.britishcheloniagroup.org.uk/caresheets/caresheets</a>
Weeds/seeds/supplements	<a href="http://www.happytortoises.com/">http://www.happytortoises.com/</a>
Equipment	<a href="http://www.happytortoises.com/">http://www.happytortoises.com/</a>



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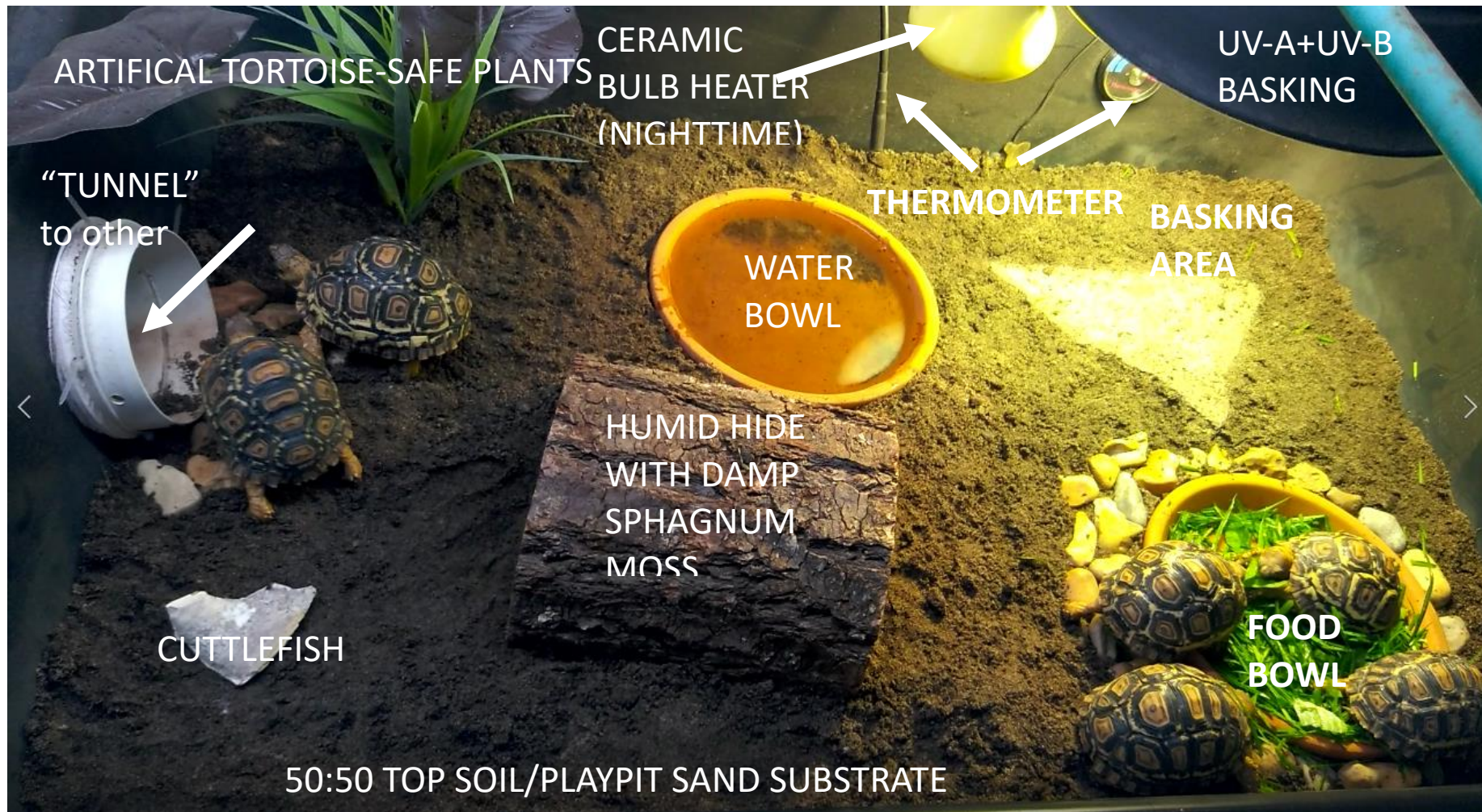


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## Mediterranean Spur Thighed (or "Greek") Tortoise – Care Sheet

Example of hatchling indoor area using builders mixing tubs joined together (items in tub should be away from edges to prevent climbing and injury)



NB: Above shows an example of one of my hatchling leopard tortoise setups. The identical setup is also suitable for Mediterranean Spur Thighed tortoises.



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## Mediterranean Spur Thighed (or "Greek") Tortoise – Care Sheet

Example of hatchling outdoor area with plenty of grass & tortoise safe weeds/flowers. Hatchlings and juveniles should only go outdoors when temperatures are above 20°C. \*Please refer to Hibernation section for details on hibernating your tortoise.



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