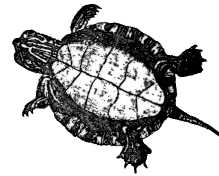


Baby Water Turtles



HOUSING: An aquarium is fine for babies. Just make sure it is large enough, such as 5 hatchling turtles in a 20 gallon tank. Keep them warm (75 to 85 degrees) throughout the winter months. Even warmer if they are not eating. Keep the water clean. Do NOT use sand or gravel on the bottom because when eaten, these can cause intestinal impaction. Provide a place to climb out of the water to dry off thoroughly such as a rock sticking out above the water, a piece of driftwood or even a piece of styrofoam (that is not falling apart.) Tetra-Terrafauna has a product called a “basking buoy” which works well. Real and artificial plants will be able to support a hatchling out of the water. Fill the tank half full with water, use a heater, a thermometer and a place to dry off and your turtle should remain healthy until you can place him outside in the spring.

FEEDING: Baby turtles are mostly carnivorous like their parents. Feed them tiny redworms, all sorts of bugs, slugs, tiny snails and you can also try some Reptomin, trout or catfish chow, small pieces of raw steak, beef heart, fish (bones and all) and cooked poultry. Sometimes they like to nibble on a piece of lettuce floating on top of the water. Feed them whenever they are hungry. **TURTLES EAT UNDER WATER. THEY CANNOT SWALLOW UNLESS THEY ARE UNDER WATER.**

BITS AND PIECES: *wash your hands after handling any animal.* Turtles will carry disease if they are kept in filthy conditions. Turtles do best outdoors. When the weather is warm, place them outdoors in a kiddy pool filled a little less than half with water. Add some floating pieces of driftwood to climb on and to hide under. Add water plants to hide under and also flower pots set on their sides. Birds will carry off small turtles so make sure the little creatures have a place to hide. Frogs are also known to eat hatchlings. It happened to me!

If a turtle must live indoors permanently, then install a Vita-Lite over his tank to simulate sunshine. Turtles will get shell-rot and fungus if not exposed to direct sunlight. Sunshine coming through a window filters out the ultra-violet rays. The only benefit is the warmth the turtle feels. Direct sunlight prevents and cures fungus and shell-rot. A little table salt added to the water often helps these conditions.

