

## Painted Turtle

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



species  
profile  
**Painted**  
**TURTLE**

Painted Turtles are the most common and most widely distributed turtles in North America. They can live as long as 35 to 40 years, although most will live 15 to 25 years. These small aquatic turtles enjoy basking in the sun and swimming in freshwater. With proper care they can make excellent pets.

### Species Profile: Painted Turtle

<b>Scientific Name:</b>	<i>Chrysemys picta</i>
<b>Natural Environment:</b>	United States, east of the Rocky Mountains.
<b>Average Size:</b>	5"-8".
<b>Average Life Span:</b>	15-25 years.
<b>Appearance:</b>	Their smooth, slightly domed shell is solid black or olive in color. The shell's topside has a border of red markings, while the underside contains striking patterns of yellow, red, orange and/or black. The turtle's skin is brightly colored with yellow and red lines, and the turtle's toes are webbed to facilitate swimming.
<b>Habitat</b>	
<b>Lighting:</b>	Full spectrum fluorescent lighting to provide for <a href="#">UVB</a> .

<b>Temperature:</b>	70-75°F water temperature and 84-88°F basking area temperature.
<b>Housing:</b>	An aquatic terrarium or aquarium with a width of at least three times the shell length and a length of at least six times the shell length. The water depth should be at least as deep as the shell is wide. A depth of 10"-30" is suitable for most average-sized turtles. The habitat should also have a dry basking area for your turtle. In addition, a filtration system and water changes are necessary to maintain clean and clear water.
<b>Diet/Feeding:</b>	Painted Turtles can be fed an <a href="#">omnivorous diet</a> every other day or as little as two to three times a week as adults. Meat should make up 65-85% of the diet, with dark leafy greens making up the remainder. Some meats they may consume include insects, worms, fish, and commercial turtle food. Be careful not to overfeed, and provide a calcium supplement with <a href="#">Vitamin D3</a> .
<b>Behavior/Interaction:</b>	Painted Turtles are more adaptable than many other turtles. In their natural habitat, they prefer to live in freshwater that is quiet, shallow and has a thick layer of mud. Their small size allows them to move quickly and easily and they'll dive under the water the instant they sense danger. Painted Turtles are diurnal, enjoying basking in the sun during the day and resting at the water's bottom or on a partially submerged log, rock, or other object at night.