

Elongate tortoises

Indotestudo elongata

Outside of humid, hot tropical or semi-tropical localities, this tortoise will require very extensive terrarium accommodation for much of the year. 'Fish-Tank' type vivaria are absolutely NOT suitable (except for very small juveniles). This is a fairly difficult and demanding species which requires special care and conditions.

Males are also highly territorial and it is necessary to be careful when keeping groups as fighting may occur.

Elongate tortoises should not be mixed with other species, but should be kept entirely separately in order to reduce the risk of cross-infection by 'alien' organisms which may cause diseases.



This tortoise's natural range includes Thailand, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, south China, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia and Kampuchea. The head is pale yellow except in the breeding season when both sexes undergo a colour change to feature pink hues around the eyes and nostrils. In the wild, *I. elongata* typically occurs in teak forests where the humidity is high, although it is also found in hot dry conditions. It is most active during the early part of the rainy season (when breeding also occurs). Some keepers report that *I. elongata* is most active at dawn and dusk, when it can be observed hunting for food. This tortoise typically avoids strong sunlight, and does not normally seem interested in basking facilities (although, given its wide distribution, regional preferences may exist). As in the wild, peak activity is often seen following heavy, warm, summer rain. Daytime environmental temperature should be maintained in the 26 - 30°C region during summer (78 - 86 °F). In winter, daytime temperatures can be reduced to 24 °C (75 °F) . At night, temperatures can be reduced to around 18 °C (65 ° F). This tortoise regularly takes snails, slugs and worms in addition to green leafy material, fruit and vegetables. A bathing pool is essential, as *Indotestudo elongata* is known to drink copiously and likes to sit, half-submerged, for several hours at a time. In the wild, fallen fruits are believed to comprise a high proportion of its diet. Many keepers provide a diet rich in prepared meats such as dog food for *I. elongata*, but this is probably inappropriate. Only a small amount of low fat animal protein (such as rehydrated cat pellets with added vitamins and calcium) is provided on an irregular basis to the Elongate tortoises in the Tortoise Trust collection. This appears to be entirely adequate and is more conducive to long-term good health.

- Asiatic tropical species
- Do not hibernate
- Omnivorous diet
- Some live food
- Require varying degrees of humidity
- Moist substrate required
- Require large to very large terrarium
- Regular soaking or constant access to water recommended
- Active at dawn and dusk – secretive
- Stress very easily

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Further details on keeping Elongate tortoises are available from the Tortoise Trust

