

Gopher Tortoise

Species of turtle.
Native to Southeast US.
Adult Size:
6 to 16 inches.
Weight:
4 to 13 pounds.
Top shell: Carapace.
Bottom shell: Plastron.
Connected at sides for protection.
Sections of shell called scutes.



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Terrestrial. Can't swim.
Live underground in burrows up to 50 feet long.

Dig with front feet.

"Keystone species" because they share their burrow with 360 other species.

Herbivorous.

Especially grass, mushrooms, and berries.



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Lay eggs.
Incubate 100 days.
Sex depends on heat of sand in the nest.
– F if > 30 degrees C.
– M if < 30 degrees C.
Most eggs eaten by predators.
Only 6% survive.
Normal lifespan 40 years.
Some much longer.



















