



Pancake Tortoise

Malacochersus tornieri

Description: It is no question why they are named the “pancake” tortoise – they are a small tortoise that uses its flattened state to its advantage. Their shell is flexible and they are even known as the “soft-shelled tortoise” in some countries.



Habitat: Rocky hills, outcrops, and the arid scrub of the savannah.

Range: Northern and eastern Tanzania and Southern Kenya.

Life Span: 60 years.

Natural Diet: They are herbivores, feeding only on plant material such as grasses and fallen fruits.

Zoo Diet: Chopped vegetables, fruits, greens, and alfalfa hay.



Behavior: Pancake tortoises are good climbers and will climb up into crevices where they can wedge themselves into a tight area for protection against predators. Because of its flat shell, it is easier for them to flip over when upside down.



Reproduction: A female will lay 1 or 2 times a year with clutches of 1-4 eggs at a time and bury them for incubation. They will hatch after about 120 days.

Conservation: Vulnerable.