

SOUTH AMERICAN RED FOOTED TORTOISE

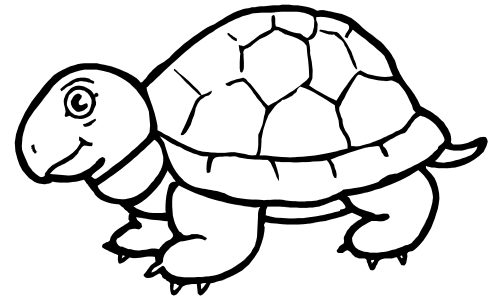
Phylum: Chordata, Class: Reptilia, Order: Chelonia
Geochelone carbonaria

Status: Not endangered

Habitat: moist savannas & forests

Range: South America; introduced on some Caribbean islands

Diet in the wild: grasses, fallen fruits, succulents, carrion



Other facts:

- Red-footed tortoises are named for the red spots (scales) visible on their front legs.
- Red-footed tortoises mate year round. Males distinguish other males from females by watching their head movements. If no responsive head movement is seen after two tortoises encounter each other, the male assumes that the stranger is a female.
- The female digs a cavity in which to deposit her eggs.
- A female may lay a group of 2-15 eggs at one time. (A group of eggs is called a clutch.) Several clutches may be laid during the nesting season.
- There is a South American yellow-footed tortoise, which is larger.
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