

Hot Summer Behavior

Changes in Behavior

Coping with Extreme Heat

Rain Challenges & Solutions

Vacation Planning

Hatchling Planning



Changes in Behavior

- Less time outside the burrow
 - Emerges earlier
 - When sunny, too hot to stay out for long
 - Not as much time for interaction
- Eating less---perhaps
 - Pet tortoises learn your schedule—eat when you serve them
 - Not as much time for browsing
 - Not as many yummy flowers

Coping with Extreme Heat

- Estivation (period of dormancy, torpor)
 - May stay in burrow for 1-2 weeks
 - Not eating is not a problem
- Why estivate?
 - To conserve energy. It requires more energy to come out, get hot and then try to cool off than to just stay inside in the relative cool and wait for cooler weather

Coping with Extreme Heat

- Sleeping outside the burrow
 - As the weather cools in the evening, the temperature outside may become cooler than the temperature inside the burrow
 - Your tortoise may emerge around 9 or 10 pm to sleep outside
 - It may go back inside at daybreak to emerge again later

Monsoon Time

- Tortoise's strategy for survival—come out to get a drink any time it rains, summer or winter
 - Drinks from puddles, just like in the wild



Burrow Protection

- We can help the burrow with heavy rain
- Temporarily cover with a tarp
- Remove immediately to avoid a greenhouse effect (steamy interior)



Soaking Your Tortoise

- Every few weeks (at least), soak your tortoise
- In shallow, tepid water
- How long? Until it wants to get out!



Vacation Planning

- Tortoise is best left at home in its habitat
 - Has enough browsing plants, water, shelter
 - Tortoise can easily go a week without eating
- Visit to another habitat---not a good idea
 - Possibility of disease transmission
 - Possibility of fighting or mating

Hatchlings

Please separate you mating pair!!!!

- But, if your female has laid eggs:
 - Plan now to create a hatchling habitat ***outside***
 - All tortoises, even hatchlings, must live outside to be healthy
 - Start now to find new custodians
 - Refer prospective custodians to TG ***before*** you give them a tortoise
- Hatching occurs late August - early October

Awwwwww

