

Early Spring Care



Habitat Freshening

- ☐ Pick up little bits of plastic, paper, shiny things
- ☐ Check for any tortoise hazards
- ☐ Clean water dish
- ☐ Check irrigation
- ☐ Add new plants

Protect yummy little plants from a hungry tortoise

Emergence

- Varies from late February to late April or even early May
 - ▣ Note date in log – tortoises go into and emerge from brumation at just about the same time every year
 - ▣ Weigh and measure tortoise right away for log
- Take action if your tortoise has not emerged within about two weeks of its normal date –check the burrow, dig it up, call for Snooper

Behavior

- ❑ Several hours of basking
- ❑ May not start browsing for days or even weeks
- ❑ Wants to eat all those tender new leaves
- ❑ Feed the tortoise only after it starts browsing.
Otherwise it's not ready to digest food.
- ❑ Enjoy watching your tortoise!

After it's up and browsing...

- Soak in a pan of shallow, lukewarm water. Tortoise may drink for 20-30 minutes!



Perform a medical checkup

- ▣ Nares (nostrils) not bubbly?
- ▣ Eyes clear and eyelids not puffy?
- ▣ Shell looks good and free from ticks or other bugs?
 - (Never turn a female upside down to check under shell. She may have eggs that could get stuck.)
- ▣ Muscles look firm and fat; tortoise is hefty
- ▣ Use our Information Sheet for a complete exam
- ▣ <http://screencast.com/t/z9xA9Bttm1A>

As spring progresses

- Tortoise may sleep outside under a little shelter in early spring since the burrow temp is colder than the outside temp
- Lovely temperatures allow your tortoise to be outside most of the day browsing, basking, and eating a lot (may put on a growth ring)
- As the temp increases, tortoise:
 - ▣ Starts the day earlier
 - ▣ Spends less time basking to get to right temp
 - ▣ Seeks shelter sooner in the day

Young Plan Protection

□ After browsing

(This is the tufted evening primrose that survived!)



□ With Protection



Dandelion vs Thistle

□ Dandelion

Grows flat to ground



□ Thistle

Grows upward, turns purply, spiky leaves



Finding Tortoise Care on Website

- Planting
 - ▣ Dandelions from seed
 - ▣ Spineless cactus
- Marking Your Tortoise
- Medical Section

- Please browse the Information Sheet section on our website

Mmmmm

