



Plants to grow for tortoises

Grasses

Bermuda

Common Bermuda is preferred, not hybrid.

Timothy Hay

Phleum pretense.

Ground cover

White clover, *Trifolium repens*

Trees

Elm, *Ulmus spp.* and Mulberry, *Morus, spp.*

Offer young leaves only

Vines

Hall's Honeysuckle (Set base of trellis away from wall to make a shady place)

Grape, *Vitis spp.* Offer young leaves only, no fruit. Thompson Seedless preferred

Morning Glory, *Ipomoea spp.* Perennial vine. Large dark purple flowers, not in full sun
Virginia Creeper, *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*.

Toxic plants (see also online)

Rhubarb, *Rheum rhabarbarum*. Leaves

Tomato, *Lycopersicon spp.* Only the leaves and plant are toxic

Chinaberry Tree, *Melia azederach umbracalifera*. Leaves and fruit must be kept off irrigated grass

Oleander, *Nerium oleander*. Leaves and flowers. Tortoises often ignore what falls.

Perennial ornamentals

Primrose, *Oenothera*, species including: **Mexican Evening Primrose**, *O. berlandieri*

Somewhat invasive, surround with several feet of dry soil.

Yellow Creeping Primrose *O. stubbei*

Somewhat invasive, surround with several feet of dry soil (native of NM/AZ).

White Evening Primrose, *O. pallida*

Tufted Evening Primrose, *O. caespitosa*

Fragrant white flowers, reseeds readily.

Ivy Geranium, *Pelargonium pelatum*

Has a trailing habit if within reach of tortoises.

Gazania, *Gazania spp.*

Somewhat spreading, large, daisy-like flowers, various colors

Hollyhock, *Alcea rosea*. Leaves and flowers

Good "weeds"

Dandelion, *Taraxacum officinale*. Important food plant, especially for hatchlings.

Filaree or **Heron's Bill**, *Erodium cicutarium*. Germinates in winter, feathery leaves, tiny purple flowers.

Spurge, *Euphorbia spp.* Appears in lawns in summer then disappears.



Tortoises love dandelions!

Annuals

Petunia, *Petunia hybrida*

Nasturtium, *Tropaeolum spp.*

Plant from seed.

Pansy, *Viola spp.*

Portulaca (Moss Rose), *Portulaca grandiflora*

Shrubs

Desert Willow, *Chilopsis linearis*. Tall open shrub, low branching, purple flowers spring through fall.

Rose, *Rosa spp.* Leaves and flowers.

Hibiscus, *Hibiscus spp.* Usually needs protection in winter. Large pot on patio usually works.

Yellow Bells or Trumpets, *Stenolobium* (or *Tecoma*) *stans*. Broad-leaf variety. Not a vine. Many large flowers, spring and summer, attracts hummingbirds.

Spineless Cactus, *Opuntia ficus-indica*. Offer new pads, only; flowers, fruit--prickly pears.

Globe Mallow, *Sphaeralcea spp.* Native species with spikes of coral-colored flowers in early spring.

TG#21: 05/14