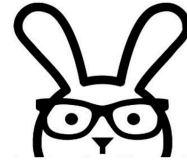


Red Eared Slider Care



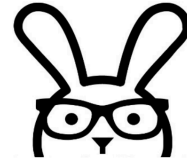
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- *Trachemys scripta*
- Lifespan: 30-50 years
- Puberty: 3-5 years
- Males have long nails and longer, thicker tails and females
 - Males smaller than females
- **By-laws in Auckland that state RES cannot be “sold, distributed, released or allowed to breed in the Auckland region” (please see the council website for further information- [Red-eared slider turtles: New Zealand animal pests and threats](#))**

Enclosure

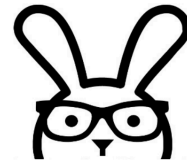
- Semi-aquatic set up with freshwater
- Water
 - Volume 40L per inch straight carapacial length of the largest in the tank + 20L extra per RES
 - Powerful filtration is essential
 - External filtration with 2-3x the amount of water of the tank per hour is best as turtles produce a lot of waste
 - This should be cleaned around once a month
 - At this time other permanent fixtures can be removed and cleaned (a 1:250 mixture of F10 is ideal for this)
 - Water temp 24-30°C which should be measured daily at the top and bottom of the tank
 - If water is going to drop below 15°C then a water heater will be needed
 - Check water quality weekly
 - Ideally BEFORE a water change rather than after it
 - The recommended water testing kit in New Zealand is the API Freshwater Master Test Kit
 - Water should be:
 - PH: 7.4-7.6
 - Ammonia: 0 ppm
 - Nitrite 0 ppm
 - Nitrate <25 ppm
 - If you are having water quality issues please contact your turtle savvy veterinarian.
 - 20-25% water change every 1-2 weeks
 - Do not change 100% of the water at once as this can lead to water quality issues
 - A syphon can be useful to aid in water changes but DO NOT use your mouth to start this
 - Turtles carry salmonella and their water is also contaminated with this bacteria

- Do not tip turtle water into a sink that is used for dishes, bathing, face washing or dental hygiene
- Turtle water is great for the garden!
- Enclosure enrichment
 - Avoid gravel on the floor as hard to clean
 - Aquarium sand or large river pebbles are idea as easier to clean and less likely to result in impaction
 - Can use ornamental or live edible plants in the water
 - Edible plants provide food, enrichment and can aid in the water quality
 - Ceramic pots can be used for hiding and other ornaments that do not have sharp edges
 - Should be removed and cleaned once a month (a 1:250 mixture of F10 is ideal for this)
 - Air stones can be fun as they love the bubbles
- Dry docks useful for them to get out but often don't enable them to get 100% dry
 - They need to be able to get 100% out of the water and dry in a basking area so need more than just a dry dock.
 - 30-35°C basking area
 - A radiant heat source is ideal for this such as a halogen bulb
 - The heat source is separate to the UV bulb
 - This should be turned off every 12-14 hrs (along with the UV source)
 - Monitor temperature in the basking zone daily with a thermometer at the level of the turtle as well as a temperature gun
 - Also nice to have an area to dig/lay eggs in the land portion
 - Sterile sand-soil is a great option
 - This aids enrichment and also helps prevent reproductive problems in females as they are able to lay eggs without a male present.
- UV light
 - Minimum 10% bulb
 - Arcadia proT5 is ideal
 - Should be at a height specified by the manufacturer from the turtle
 - Make sure no glass or plastic is between bulb and turtle
 - Needs to be changed every 6 months or tested by a solarmeter every 6 months to ensure correct UV output (the UV output fades with time)
 - Turn off every 12-14 hours along with the basking light to mimic night-time
 - Having 30 minutes of supervised outside time is also great for enrichment and aids in the turtles requirement



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Diet



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- RES are omnivores meaning they require animal protein and vegetables in their diet.
- The amount of animal protein required differs depending on how old the RES is.
- <1 year old
 - 50% protein
 - Protein sources can be offered every 2 days
 - 50% vege (aquatic plants, green leaf lettuce)
- >1yr old
 - 25% protein
 - Can be offered every 3 days
 - 75% veges (pellets every other day)
- Protein sources
 - Feeder fish (e.g. guppies), crickets, earthworms, snails
 - Turtle pellets can also be fed as part of protein source
 - Recommended pellets are Fluker's Aquatic Turtle Buffet or Reptomin Turtle Sticks
 - Gut load live insects 12-24 hours before feeding with Arcadia Superload or Repashy Superload
 - The portion size should be similar to the size of the turtle head
- Vegetables
 - Feed more: Green leaf lettuce, red leaf lettuce, aquatic plants, dandelion leaves
 - Feed in moderation: courgette, kale, pumpkin, carrots, broccoli, mango, papaya
- Supplements
 - RES require supplements to maintain their health but too much can cause issues.
 - Calcium is very important to supply
 - Cuttlefish bone is a good calcium source
 - Dissolvable turtle blocks in water (these should be replaced when dissolved)
 - Calgrit at a rate of 20g per litre of water (topped up once dissolved)
 - Gut loading insects to make sure they have more calcium
 - Multivitamin
 - An appropriate multivitamin is recommended once a fortnight
 - The recommended multivitamins available in NZ are Flukers Reptile Multivitamin or Repashy Calcium Plus