

“Big Foot” the Yellow Footed Tortoise

General Yellow Footed Tortoise Information

Scientific Name

Geochelone denticulata

Size/Weight

They reach a length of up to 2 ½ feet. Their weight is between 25-35 lbs.

Life Span

These turtles have a relatively long life span of up to 50 years in the wild and 75+ years when in captivity.

Range

Tropical and humid areas of South America such as Panama, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, and several of the Caribbean islands.

Diet

Grasses, plants, fallen fruits, and dead animals.

Breeding

Females lay 6-16 eggs per clutch, which take 105-202 days to hatch depending on the temperature. In the wild, breeding is synchronized with onset of rainy season.

Population Status

Yellow footed tortoises are hunted for food in South America where they are considered a delicacy. Combined with the deforestation of their natural habitats, it is most likely that they will soon be put on the endangered species list.

ABOUT BIG FOOT

Big Foot is a male tortoise. At an estimated age of 55 years old, he is our oldest animal resident at the GNC. In fact, Big Foot was already a mature tortoise when the GNC opened in 1975, though he wasn't donated until nearly 15 years later. Big Foot spends his days lounging in our tortoise habitat with a group of various other tortoises. Using his shell and powerful legs, he is fond of pushing over his water bin and muscling the other tortoises out of his way. He is also one of our most active tortoises and roams the museum or the outside grounds whenever he's taken out. Every other day our volunteers fix him a large salad plate filled with greens, fruits, and veggies.



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