


The Desert Tortoise in Captivity



Coollest thing about living at Edwards?

Adopting a captive desert tortoise.

Interested in adopting a captive tortoise?

Edwards biologists need foster families living on base. Call today to see if a tortoise is available for adoption or sign up to be on a waiting list. You can contact Environmental Management at 277-1417 or e-mail 412CEG.CEVA.NaturalResources@us.af.mil

Worried about the care and upkeep?

Don't be. According to former foster parents and base biologists, desert tortoises make great pets and are very low maintenance.

Not planning to live on base forever?

That's okay. Adoptive families who no longer want a pet tortoise, face a permanent change of station, plan to retire from service or expect to reside off base can contact Environmental Management so the tortoise can be placed with a new family living on base.

Base Adoption Program

- Edwards started a desert tortoise adoption program in 1994. The program helps prevent the taking of wild tortoises into captivity and tracks captive tortoises to ensure they are not returned to the wild. Both actions are illegal under the *Endangered Species Act of 1973*.
- The tortoises available for adoption range in age from juvenile to adult.

Fostering a captive tortoise can be a unique and rewarding experience. Before adopting a tortoise, consider the animal's need for:

Vet Checks

- Your tortoise must receive an annual check-up. The base veterinarian can provide this check-up to you at no cost.

Habitat

- Tortoises require a burrow to help them regulate their body temperature from getting too hot or cold. You will need to provide a burrow for your tortoise to escape the elements. 412 CEG/CEVA will help provide instructions on how to construct the best home for your new pet.

Adequate Nutrition

- Tortoises feed on natural vegetation such as grass, herbs, flowers and cacti. If native plants are unavailable, a mix of dark-green leafy vegetables are recommended.
- Avoid giving your tortoise any type of lettuce, as this vegetable provides little to no nutrition for the tortoise. Other food items to avoid include: frozen or canned vegetables, dairy products, pet food, bread, fruit and celery.
- Diet Recommendations worksheet and care information are provided to you by biologist prior to adoption.



Edwards Desert Tortoise Adoption Program



Eligibility

Adoptions through this program are limited to base residents. Off-base residents may adopt desert tortoises through their local California Turtle and Tortoise Club. A local chapter can be found at www.tortoise.org/cttc/adoption.html.

Cost

Tortoise adoptions are free.

Kids

Children cannot assume full responsibility for a tortoise's care. The base program requires that tortoises be adopted by an adult. Adult tortoises are recommended for households with small children.

Current Pets

Having a dog or cat in your household does not necessarily prevent you from adopting a tortoise. A base biologist will evaluate the tortoise's proposed living conditions to determine if a potential hazards exist.

Backyard

Tortoises love to roam and need plenty of space. Dorm residents may not be allowed to foster adult tortoises for this reason.



Dozer, a foster tortoise shares his backyard with the foster family's dog. Although the duo seem like an odd pair, the foster parent says they enjoy interacting with each other.



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Information for Base Residents



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