



Western New York Herpetological Society

www.wnyherp.com

Common Name: Schwiegger's Hingeback, Serrated Hingeback, Eroded Hingeback

Latin name: *Kinixys erosa*

Home's Hingeback , African Hingeback *Kinixys homeana*

Native to: Nigeria, the Congo, Ivory Coast

Size: *Kinixys erosa* is the largest of the species and can get up to thirteen (13) inches.

Life span: Unknown in captivity

General appearance: Both are similar in characteristics. They are a medium to reddish brown shell that is sharply angular and *K. homeana* drops off quickly in the back end. The most unique characteristic is the hinge that is across the carapace. This is the only living turtle to exhibit this hinge on the carapace. It is a broad band of flexible connective tissue located between the fourth (4th) and fifth (5th) costal and seventh (7th) and eighth (8th) costal that aids in the protection of head and limbs. The legs are also more slender than most tortoise and gives them and awkward gait. The tail end has a club-like tubercle. The head is usually light in color.

Housing requirements:

Enclosure: Space requirements should be at least 3 sq. ft. per inch of shell length: It is best to keep your tortoise outside where temperatures are not too extreme Humidity is a very important factor with these tortoises. Humidity should be at least 70% - 80%. To achieve this you may want to put plastic sheet covering over the top of the enclosure. Plants will also help achieve high humidity and also provide shade. They can actually be semi-aquatic. It is important to give time a place to soak or swim. A secure hiding place is also beneficial.

Temperature: Temperatures should be kept at 75° - 81° F for day temperatures with a basking spot of 83° F. Night temperatures should be 65° – 75° F. Heat rocks are NOT recommended as burns may result from their use.

Heat/Light: They are most active during the dawn and dusk time. Full spectrum lighting can be beneficial but not proven. They do not like bright light. Incandescent lights or infrared lights may be used to provide basking spots. Ceramic emitters or under-the-tank heaters may also be used to heat the enclosure. Heated rocks are NOT recommended.

Substrate: Newspaper and aspen are acceptable. However, Peat moss, leaf litter, sterilized soil and Cyprus mulch are going to help with the humidity.

© 2001 - 2003 by Western New York Herpetological Society

This document is for guidance only and should not be used as the sole source of information. New information is being developed daily. It is recommend that a concerted effort be made to maintain up-to-date knowledge of the animals of interest.



Western New York Herpetological Society

www.wnyherp.com

Environment: In the wild, they live in tropical forests and stream banks of Africa. It is high humidity. They need to have substrate, which tortoises can dig into works well also.

Diet: These species are omnivorous meaning that they will eat both plants and animal matter. Among favorite animal matter is crickets, earthworms, crickets, snails, zoophobas, mealworms, COOKED chicken or liver, commercial turtle food, primate biscuits, and a small amount of high quality low fat dog food. As for plant matter bananas, tomatoes, peaches, mushrooms, lettuce, melon, sliced oranges, zucchini, red/green sweet pepper and a small amount of papaya. Vitamins should be given every week. Also a cuttlebone in the enclosures will provide a place to trim the tomia (beak) and also provide an additional source of Calcium.

Maintenance: This species of tortoise does not make a very good beginner pet. Most are wild caught and heavily parasitized. If one is purchased, it would be wise to consult a reptile veterinarian for the best way to treat the parasite. The enclosure should be spot cleaned daily. A thorough cleaning should be performed on a regular basis. A 5% bleach solution is an excellent disinfectant. Be sure to thoroughly rinse the enclosure before replacing the substrate and placing the tortoise back in the enclosure. It is always recommended to wash your hands thoroughly after handling the tortoise or cleaning the cage or cage accessories.

Other references or recommended reading:

Highfield, A.C. 1990. Keeping and Breeding Tortoises in Captivity. R&A Publishing ,ltd., Avon, England

Palika, Liz.. Turtles and Tortoises for Dummies. Howell House 2001

Highfield, Andy. Practical Encyclopedia of Keeping and Breeding Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles.. Carapace Press 1996

Kirkpatrick, David "Forest Hingeback Tortoise" retrieved 4 September 2002
<<http://www.unc.edu/~dtkirkpa/stuff/kinixys.html>>

Smylie, Ann "Kinixys (Hingeback Tortoise)" retrieved 4 September 2002
<<http://www.gctts.org/Kinixys/>>

Tortoise Trust "Hinge-back Tortoises" retrieved 4 September 2002
<<http://www.tortoisetrust.org/care/ckinixys.html> >