



**Featured Creature:** Hermann's Tortoise

**Scientific name:** *Testudo hermanni*

**Where are they from?**

Southern Europe along the Mediterranean Sea

**What kind of habitat do they live in?**

The shelter at night in burrows or thick vegetation, but come out every morning to bask in the sun and warm up. They typically live in Mediterranean meadows with many types of plants to graze.

**What do they eat?**

They are fully omnivorous (plant-eaters) and need a low protein, high fiber, high calcium diet. Pet tortoises do well with leafy greens, while stems and leaves of native plants from their home meadows are a preferred food for wild ones.

**How big do they get?**

These guys are pretty small for tortoises, only reaching about 8-inches shell diameter.

**How long do they live?**

Like most tortoises, they have a very long lifespan and can live 50+ years, even up to 100!

**Do they have any special adaptations?**

For protection, tortoises have a tough outer shell and protective scutes (shell scales). They are also excellent diggers, having a burrow to hide from predators and hibernate in the winter.

**Are they endangered?**

Because of habitat destruction and collection for the pet trade, the IUCN Red List classifies the western Hermann's as Endangered and the eastern Hermann's as Near Threatened.

**Fun Fact:**

Hermann's tortoises are also known as spur-tailed tortoises, because of a hardened tip of the tail.