

African Mud Turtle

African Mud Turtle species profile.

African mud turtles (of the genus *Pelusios*) are dark-colored turtles with highly domed carapacia, hinged plastra and rounded heads. Many of African mud turtles are inveterate baskers, and the use of a full-spectrum light when providing basking areas is strongly recommended, as are more spacious haulout platforms. *Pelusios subniger* is a commonly encountered species that can attain a maximum length of 8 inches.

Adequate space is important for African mud turtles. One or two small, semiaquatic turtles could properly live in at least a 40 gallon breeder size tank, but more space is always preferable. Cleanliness is essential for the health of the turtles. Enclosures should be cleaned frequently. Some species may be kept outside (year-round or during the summer, depending upon the climate). For haulout areas, a few limb sections wedged into place and protruding well above the water in the center of the tank are ideal in most cases.

Warmth--especially in the form of a basking area--is very important. Most African mud turtles enjoy basking temperatures ranging from 84 to 94 degrees Fahrenheit. Water temperatures between 72 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit are fine. Vitamin D and calcium supplements, used in conjunction with full-spectrum lighting, will give turtles a better chance at good health.