

## Health

RES are generally hardy and active animals and have very few problems if their needs are met. 90 per cent of more of the health problems we see are related to poor husbandry and/or diet. Keep their water and environment clean, and provide a complete commercial pellet as the main portion of its diet – these two things will ensure that your RES lives a long and healthy life!

If your RES is more lethargic and weaker than normal, it may be a sign of a health problem. If you notice any change in behaviour, or changes in his external appearance (e.g. puffy, cloudy eyes, swollen neck, holes/cracks/soft areas on the shell, unusual smells, redness of the limbs/head, etc), please bring your RES to a veterinarian who is familiar with reptile anatomy.

If your RES does not eat but is still behaving normally, veterinary attention is not required straight away. They may sometimes become inappetent for a period without any adverse effects. Observe for any other symptoms and if present, bring your RES for a medical consultation. In any case, if the inappetence continues for more than a week, it is advisable to seek the opinion of a veterinarian.



## Adoption Information:

There are no RES for adoption at the SPCA.

## Location of the SPCA:

31 Mount Vernon Road, Singapore 368054

MRT Station: Bartley (Circle Line)

Bus Services: 28, 93, 158

## Contact Information:

Telephone: 6287 5355

Web: [www.sPCA.org.sg](http://www.sPCA.org.sg)

## Opening Hours (Adoption Area):

- Mon/Tue/Wed/Fri/Sat: 10.00am to 4.00pm
- Sunday and Public Holiday: 11.00am to 3.30pm
- Thursday: Closed (Unless it is a public holiday)

**PLEASE REMEMBER YOUR PET NEEDS YOU TO BE RESPONSIBLE AND COMMITTED. A PET IS FOR LIFE.**

Biodata of the **Red-Eared Slider**:

Reproduction Age : Between 2 and 5 years  
(Depending on the size of the carapace)

Gestation Period : About 2 months

Average Litter : At least 1 egg (to 20 eggs)

Independence : When eggs are hatched  
(60 to 90 days after being laid)

Lifespan : 20 to 50 years

# Care of your Pet Red-Eared Slider



### Important Information:

The SPCA does not encourage the keeping of Red-Eared Sliders (RES) as pets due to the long-term commitment needed (this reptile lives between 20 and 50 years). Often, pet owners release their Red-Eared Sliders into ponds and reservoirs (an illegal act), causing potential harm to their pets and upsetting the ecological balance of our natural environment. Under the Animals and Birds Act, anyone found guilty of abandoning an animal can be imprisoned for up to 12 months, fined up to \$10,000, or both.

### General Information:

A native of the temperate North America, the Red-Eared Slider (RES) adapts well and thrives under our tropical conditions.

The RES is commonly sold as hatchlings in our local pet/fish shops. Their cheap price and small size often induces impulse buying. They may be only about 1.5 inches in diameter when purchased but given the right conditions, they can grow up to 12 inches in a few years. This, plus the fact that they have a long lifespan, makes them a pet that will require a lot of evaluation on the part of prospective owners – they are a long-term commitment.



### Housing:

The RES is a semi-aquatic terrapin spending part of its life in the water and part of it out of the water. As such, a proper captive environment will need to have both these conditions met. The ideal accommodation would be an outside pond. Alternatively, it can be kept in a large aquarium or similar container.

There must be somewhere where your slider can climb up out of the water, e.g. large pebbles or rocks, pieces of driftwood and/or bricks. The more advanced owner may also create intricate riverbank environments for them.

As terrapins eat, defecate and live in the water, it is imperative that water quality is good. Dirty water not only smells and looks bad, but harbours bacteria, fungi and possibly other parasitic organisms that can harm your terrapin. One of the best methods of keeping water clean is to employ some kind of filtration system like those used in aquarium systems (outside canister filters are ideal). If no filter system is used, then the water must be changed at least once daily, and ideally twice daily. Allow tap water to stand for 24 hours before transferring your pet. If the water looks and smells clean, then it will likely be clean enough. Feeding in a separate container of water will also help to keep the water in the main habitat clean – put your terrapin in a separate container where you can feed him. Return him to his main habitat after he defecates.

In Singapore, additional heat is not necessary as our environment is warm enough. Sunlight, however, is essential for good growth and development of your terrapin.

Just 30 minutes of direct tropical sunlight will provide all the ultraviolet light necessary. In the absence of sunlight, you will need to ensure that they have either a source of UV-B (special reptile lights, 12 to 14 hours daily) or Vitamin B3 added to their diets.



### Diet:

RES are essentially omnivorous in nature. When young, they tend to be more carnivorous and will devour meaty prey items like prawns and fish. As they mature, they tend to be a little more herbivorous and will take vegetable matter. In captivity, we recommend that they be fed a complete commercial pellet. Make sure the pellet diet you purchase states that it is designed for RES or aquatic turtles. There are a number of these available on the market in Singapore.

Do not feed commercial diets that are composed of dried krill (shrimp like creatures) or market prawns – they often get addicted to these diets and being insufficient in nutrients, will lead to health problems and a short lifespan.

If your terrapin is already addicted, try to change his diet by slowly introducing pellets during feeding time while reducing his normal diet. Meanwhile, adding a good multi-vitamin and calcium supplement into his diet can reduce deficiencies – usually by soaking his current diet in a multi-vitamin/calcium solution before feeding.

Another way of providing calcium is to break up a cuttlebone and float it in the water – RES will often chew off pieces to obtain calcium. It will also help to keep their beaks trimmed.