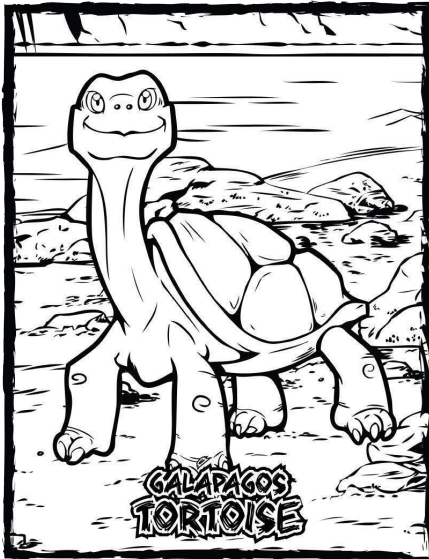




GALAPAGOS TORTOISE

- Species Profile -



DESCRIPTION

The Galápagos tortoises have large brown shells. They're considered giant tortoises, with some weighing as much as 850 lbs. Their life span is very long. A tortoise named Harriet lived until she was 170 years old.

HABITAT & RANGE

These tortoises can be found on the Galápagos Islands. This is a volcanic island in the Pacific off the coast of Ecuador. Most of these tortoises like to live on the wet highlands of the island.

UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS

Galápagos tortoises and Darwin's finch work together to help each other. The tortoise will raise its neck high into the air. The birds eat parasites from under the tortoise's shell. The tortoise will stand still until the finch is finished.

REPRODUCTION

Galápagos tortoises mate all year. The females nest on beaches. They may lay four eggs per season.

DIET

Galápagos tortoises only eat plants. They eat cacti, grass, leaves, fruits and milkweed. These tortoises can live for almost a year without food.

PREDATORS, THREATS & CONSERVATION

Because so many people were eating them, there weren't many Galápagos tortoises left. Hawks like to eat the tortoise eggs and babies.

CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS

The Galápagos Conservancy is a group of people who care a lot about the Galápagos Tortoise. These people want to help the tortoises have a safe place to live. You can learn more at www.galapagos.org

WILD FACTS

Scientific Nme	<i>Chelonoidis nigra</i>
Weight	250 – 500 lbs
Height	Up to 5 ft
Lifespan	100 – 150 years
Closest Relatives	Chaco Tortoise, Yellow-Footed Tortoise