

Five Reasons to Not Buy a Turtle or Tortoise as Holiday Gift

American Tortoise Rescue Suggests Fun Toys or Donations Instead

MALIBU, CA, US, December 10, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [American Tortoise Rescue](#), an international nonprofit rescue and sanctuary for [turtle](#) and tortoise protection, is asking consumers to not buy live animals, especially turtles and tortoises, as holiday gifts.

According to Susan Tellem, executive director of American Tortoise Rescue (ATR), while these wonderful animals have outlived the dinosaurs, wide spread illegal smuggling and the commercial pet trade in turtles and tortoises has devastated wild populations worldwide. Many once thriving species, close to 50 percent, are now threatened or endangered. Worse, many are now extinct. "The pet industry thrives on small, adorable exotic animals with big price tags," Tellem says. "What we recommending every holiday season is to avoid impulse buys. We understand the appeal of an adorable two inch baby turtle," Tellem adds. "But, many turtle and tortoise rescues throughout the U.S. and in other countries have these wonderful animals of all sizes and species for adoption to good homes."



Turtles at American Tortoise Rescue



Popcorn at American Tortoise Rescue

Tellem gives five reasons why people shouldn't buy a turtle or tortoise as a gift.

1. Turtles are boring. Parents shouldn't expect their kids to find everlasting enjoyment in an animal that basically sits still most of the day sunning itself. Many kids tire of a turtle in a tank and don't want to clean the habitat and change the water. Turtles and tortoises poop, Tellem reminds everyone.

2. Most turtles and many tortoises should already be hibernating at this time of year. It's unnatural for them to be awake and available for sale when they should be sleeping from about October through April. It's cruel to sell wild animals that need to hibernate to stay healthy.

3. Turtles and tortoises confined in tanks are miserable. It's like a human spending their entire life in a bathtub, Tellem says. The only proper habitat for adult animals is outside. Natural sun exposure helps maintain a healthy shell and is necessary for the animal to grow and thrive. During hibernation, most reptiles can stay outside in shelters that are dry and predator proof.

4. Adoption is the ideal option, Tellem says. During the spring, when the animals awake, rescues and animal shelters place them in good "forever homes" with proper habitats. There is no charge or a minimal one to adopt at most sanctuaries, only the promise that the animal will be given exceptional care for the rest of its life.

5. Turtles can easily live 25 or 50 years or more and tortoises can top 100 years. An impulse buy without a thought to the future is not in the best interest of the animal, Tellem says. Plans need to be made in wills and with family members since the animals can outlive their owners. 31 years ago with her husband, Marshall Thompson, says, "Many owners assume that when the tortoise becomes a problem, zoos will take them. This is simply not true. Zoos are not interested in cast-off pets."

She adds that a domesticated pet cannot be put back into the wild. It will die or introduce disease into an already precarious wild ecosystem. In many states, it is also illegal.

Tellem says that the option of placing the animal with a rescue is not always the answer, as her rescue is full as are many others. The best solution is to find a compassionate adopter who is

WORLD TURTLE DAY® May 23rd



AMERICAN
TORTOISE
RESCUE

World Turtle Day is May 23rd and celebrated annually.

willing to give a proper “forever home” to the pet. There are many national rescue organizations listed here <http://www.tortoise.com/turtle-rescue-centers-in-usa.html> which can facilitate adoptions if people are interested in getting an animal. Also check with your veterinarian or your local nextdoor.com site.

One way to enjoy a turtle or tortoise without harming them is to make a donation to a nonprofit like www.tortoise.com/give. “This allows us to provide care and feeding to the more than 100 turtles and tortoises at the sanctuary. We do not use funds for salaries or overhead. And our Hospital Fund helps a variety of animals that need specialized care,” Tellem says.

American Tortoise Rescue is a nonprofit founded in 1990 to provide for the protection of all species of tortoise and turtle. More than 4,000 have been rescued and rehomed to date. Foundlings that cannot be adopted because of ill health remain in the care of ATR for the remainder of their lives. ATR works to abolish “live market” slaughter of turtles globally and stop the cruel importation and exploitation of a variety of species. For more information, contact: American Tortoise Rescue at www.tortoise.com ; or email info@tortoise.com . Follow on Twitter @tortoiserescue and on Facebook .

Quick facts to tweet

- Illegal smuggling and the commercial pet trade in turtles and tortoises has devastated wild populations worldwide
- Avoid impulse buys of tiny turtles at pet stores.

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