

# GIANT ASIAN POND TURTLE



## What do they look like?

The giant Asian pond turtle (*Heosemys grandis*) has a pale orange head, marked with faint black spots and rosettes. Its carapace (shell) is grey-brown, serrated on the rear edge, and has a paler ridge running down the middle. Its plastron (underside) is yellow with black markings that fan out like the spokes of a bicycle wheel. Males have longer, thicker tails. Adults measure up to 48 cm.

## Where do they live?

This species occurs in the lowlands and hills of central and southern Vietnam. It is also found in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia and Myanmar (Burma). The giant Asian pond turtle is aquatic, living in streams and freshwater marshes.

## What do they eat?

These turtles are omnivores. They eat plants, especially water hyacinth leaves, fruit and whatever invertebrates or other small animals they find in the water.

## Why are they in danger?

Giant Asian pond turtles are classified as Vulnerable (IUCN Red List) and protected by Vietnamese law under Decree 32. Despite their protected status, they are still illegally hunted and traded for their meat, turned into soup, or used in traditional Chinese medicine. They are also threatened by pollution and drainage of their aquatic habitat.

## How can we save them?

Wildlife At Risk (WAR) and other organisations like the Asian Turtle Conservation Network are fighting to stop the illegal trade by helping local authorities to enforce the law, protect turtles in the wild and confiscate them from traders. You can help us by NOT eating turtles, NOT buying turtles and NOT buying other products made from turtles.