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Geographical range

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Species of the Day: Egyptian Tortoise

The **Egyptian Tortoise**, *Testudo kleinmanni*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. This Middle Eastern and North African tortoise has a golden-coloured shell and minute shell size of less than 14 cm.

Currently, the main threats endangering this species are intensive commercial collection for the national and international pet trade, and habitat destruction which has led to its disappearance from much of its former range in scrub desert and coastal dunes. Agricultural expansion, cultivation, overgrazing, and urban encroachment have put enormous pressure on the Egyptian Tortoise's fragile and dwindling habitat, dramatically reducing available vegetation for food and cover.

Nationally protected in Egypt and Israel, including through community-based protected areas, but not in Libya, this species is also protected from international trade, although these laws are often not enforced. Its future will depend on the establishment of more protected areas, wider engagement with local communities, and improved enforcement of trade laws.



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