

Black Pine Animal Sanctuary

Animal Facts

Breed: SULCATA TORTOISE

Also known as AFRICAN SPURRED TORTOISE

Names / Sex / Age:

Puff	Male	9
Coco	Male	11

Previous Home: Private homes.

Native to: Southern edge of the Sahara, Africa; Now sold in America in pet stores

Size: 30 inches in length and weighing up to 200 pounds when full-grown.

Life Expectancy: 80-100 years!

Diet: Vegetarian, fresh grass, edible flowers, clover, cactus fruits, collard, mustard, turnip, dandelions, romaine lettuce. At Black Pine, grass hay, romaine lettuce and other leafy dark greens, and a few veggies.

Facts:

- The sulcata is the largest of the African land tortoises, and are surpassed only by the Galapagos and Aldabra tortoises in size
- Growth rings are visible, indicating age, in the tortoise's shell
- Mature males typically develop scales in the front that overlap on their legs
- Spurs round on the back legs are not known to serve any purpose
- Males have a slightly longer, thicker tail and more concave underside
- During breeding time, males are known to become quite aggressive towards one another, often ending up with bloody limbs and sometimes death
- They can grow from palm size to 45 lbs in less than 15 years
- When conditions are too hot, or too cold, they will burrow
- Sulcatas get excited just before it rains, and run around
- Tortoises hiss, croak, grunt and whistle.
- Sulcata tortoises do not hibernate
- Tortoises do not swim, they sink
- All tortoises are turtles, but not all turtles are tortoises
- Tortoises like to climb
- Some Africans regard the sulcata as a mediator between men and the gods, and they are therefore kept in villages to intercede between the head of the village and their ancestors. In Senegal, sulcatas are a sign of virtue, happiness and longevity. This respect has protected them for centuries from human dangers.

Personal History:

Cocoa and Puff were both rescued from private owners who didn't realize how large they would grow, how much they would eat, and how much space they would need. Sulcata

tortoises remain the number one species of animal Black Pine is asked to adopt, largely due to the lack of knowledge people have before purchasing them in pet stores.

Cocoa and Puff have more than doubled in size since they arrived.