

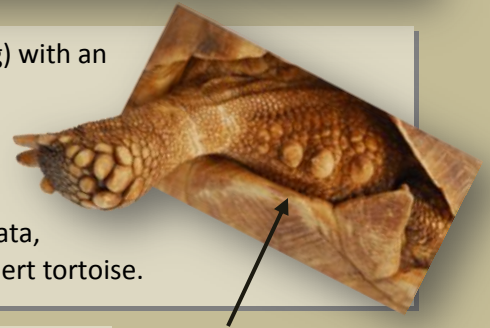
AFRICAN SPURRED TORTOISE

(*Geochelone sulcata*)

NONNATIVE



Description: Large tortoise (up to 32 inches long) with an oval-shaped, brown carapace. Front legs are covered by 3 to 6 rows of irregularly shaped, overlapping scales and have five toes each; the hind feet have four toes each. Upper jaw is double hooked. Commonly referred to as a Sulcata, these tortoises are frequently mistaken for a desert tortoise.



Three enlarged scales on each hind leg

Habitat: Completely terrestrial; native to the southern perimeter of Africa's Sahara Desert where there is little permanent water available.

Behavior: Herbivorous; relies on succulent plants for both food and as a source of water. Mostly active at dawn and dusk; digs burrows or pallets to avoid extreme heat. Does not hibernate during winter.

If you find one: If you find an African spurred tortoise, it is a captive turtle that has either escaped or has been unlawfully released. For the benefit of the animal, please contact the [nearest Game and Fish office](#) or the Phoenix Herpetological Society for information and recommendations.