

Guidance for short term holding & transportation of turtles



Turtles or terrapins of the genus *Trachemys*, commonly called red-eared turtle, yellow-bellied sliders or simply sliders are now prohibited from being kept under Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 which came into force on 1 January 2015. Existing keepers can retain specimens held before the enforcement date, but they cannot be sold, bred or exchanged and can only be rehomed to a licenced sanctuary.



Yellow-bellied slider



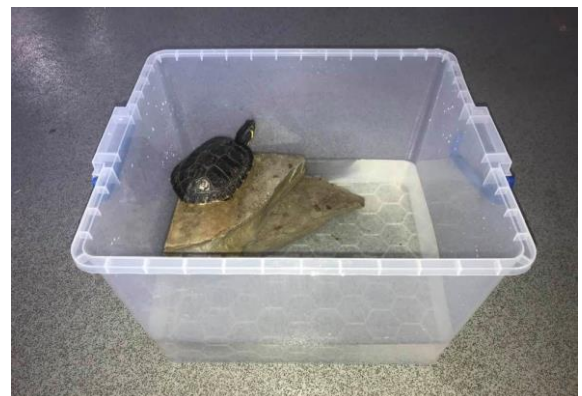
Red-eared slider



Musk turtle

The National Centre for Reptile Welfare (NCRW) will rehome slider turtles along with other species of turtles/terrapins. Sliders are the most encountered species of turtles, followed by musk turtles, cooters, and map turtles. This guidance applies only to temperate species; those species from tropical regions may require different treatment. If you are unsure of the species, please contact the NCRW for further advice.

Short term care: turtles may be found wandering or have been handed into veterinary practices and need short term care, this being defined as a 2-3 week period. Turtles need access to both water and land and whilst they do not need to swim but must be able to submerge. The image depicts the suitable short-term accommodation for turtles referred to in this guide. Extremes of temperature are to be avoided; average room temperature is ideal. If kept outside, make sure they do not freeze and provide shade if accommodation is situated in a sunny location. Do not feed them during this 2–3 week period as this will require the animals to be frequently cleaned. Turtles also travel better with empty stomachs so short-term fasting prior to transportation is recommended.



Transportation: Do not transport turtles in water; it is not necessary and will create problems. Turtles are best transported in dark-coloured plastic boxes with plenty of ventilation holes and damp (not soaking wet) towels, rags or similar on the bottom. If solid colour boxes are not available, then translucent boxes are acceptable. Cardboard boxes can be used but are not ideal and are only suitable for short distance transportation. In these circumstances transport the turtle dry, for short periods this is not a welfare concern.

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