

# Giant African Land Snail Care Sheet



Giant African Land Snails thrive in the lush forests and stunning coastlines of East Africa. They enjoy a varied diet of plants, fruits, and vegetables. To keep your Giant Snail happy and healthy, it's essential to create a suitable environment, provide a balanced diet, encourage natural behaviours, and ensure their safety. These fascinating creatures can live in groups, but it's vital to keep species separate to avoid breeding issues. Giant African snails are truly fascinating creatures! Did you know their teeth are located on their tongues? Plus, their shells grow with them throughout their lives; no hunting for new ones! It's captivating how these little wonders adapt as they grow!

## Get to know

Getting to know your snail is such a rewarding experience! By understanding its likes and dislikes, you can create an environment where it feels truly safe and cherished. As trust builds, you might even witness your snail coming out of its shell, literally and figuratively, when it feels comfortable with you. It's also fascinating to learn that snails have a remarkable sensitivity to touch. Their entire body, including their shell, is responsive; so while the shell may seem harsh, it's essential to handle them gently. Another intriguing fact is that snails may not have traditional noses, but they are still capable of smelling! They have specialised sensory cells called chemoreceptors, which are located on their tentacles and other body parts. These tiny but powerful cells help them detect smells, find food, and navigate their surroundings.

## Enclosure

Creating the perfect home for your Giant African snails is so essential, and it's great that you're taking the time to learn! A glass or plastic terrarium is the best option for these fascinating creatures. Avoid wooden enclosures, as snails love to munch on wood, and the moisture they need can lead to unpleasant rotting. Make sure your terrarium has a secure lid or door; these little adventurers are fantastic climbers and love to explore! Good ventilation is key to providing fresh oxygen and preventing unwanted bacteria. Since snails thrive in humid conditions, we want to avoid any mould. Placing the enclosure out of direct sunlight and away from radiators will help keep them comfortable and prevent drying out. Additionally, it's essential to keep their space free from strong-smelling chemicals, like air fresheners, as these can be harmful to their sensitive skin.

## Temperature

Giant African Snails thrive in warm environments, so it's essential to provide the right heat to keep them content and healthy! Using a heat mat connected to a thermostat is an excellent way to regulate the temperature, ensuring it's just right for your little friends. Avoid heat lamps, as they can dry out their delicate skin and cause burns from excessive light and heat. Position the heat mat at one end of their enclosure to create a cosy, warm area on one side and a cooler spot on the other. This setup gives your snails the freedom to choose, helping them live their best lives!



#### LIFESPAN

5 to 10 years  
in captivity

#### SIZE

20-30cm

#### TEMPERATURE

Hot end: 22°C - 25 °C  
Cold end: 18 °C - 21 °C

#### HUMIDITY

60% - 80%

## Environment

**Substrate:** Creating the perfect home for your snail can be a delightful journey! Opt for coco fibre as your substrate; it's fantastic for retaining moisture and humidity, ensuring your snail stays happy and thriving. Aim for a depth of 5 to 10 cm, as snails love to burrow. For an added touch of humidity, mix in some sphagnum moss with the substrate.

**Décor:** Decorating your snail's enclosure is so much fun and crucial for their well-being! It encourages exercise and stimulates their natural instincts. Think about adding large branches and soft, artificial plants for them to climb and explore. Just remember to steer clear of hard rocks.

**Cleaning:** It is essential to keep your enclosure clean. Promptly spot clean your enclosure whenever you notice waste. Additionally, all substrates must be replaced at least once a month.

## Diet

**Feeding:** A snail's diet plays a vital role in keeping it healthy and strong! Tortoises are exclusively plant-eaters, so they thrive on a herbivorous diet. To keep your snails happy, offer them a variety of foods since they can be pretty selective. Remember, Giant African land snails should avoid salty, acidic, or toxic foods, so do a little research to discover what's best for them. And don't forget to remove any uneaten food after 24 hours to keep their environment fresh and inviting.

**Water:** Make sure your snail has fresh water every day! A shallow plastic bowl works perfectly, especially for baby snails. Misting their enclosure not only keeps them hydrated but also creates a lovely environment. Just remember to change the water if it gets any debris. Your little friend will thrive with these simple steps!

### Giant African snail's gender

Curious about your snail's gender? Here's the fun part: your Giant African land snail is both male and female! These amazing creatures are hermaphrodites, equipped with both reproductive organs. If you prefer to keep things simple and avoid a little snail family, it's best to stick with just one snail. Even with two, you might find yourself with unexpected eggs and babies! Generally, the larger snail tends to be the one that carries the eggs, as they can hold more. Embracing this unique aspect of snails can truly enhance your experience as a pet owner!



## Health & Welfare

A healthy Giant African Land Snail (GALS) boasts a beautiful, shiny shell that's unbroken and clean! Their skin should feel moist, showing no signs of injury or pests. You'll notice a lively and curious snail that enjoys regular meals and has a hearty appetite, producing firm, well-formed droppings. Keeping a GALS thriving is truly rewarding!



## Giant African Land Snail



## Hibernation

If your snail's enclosure gets too chilly, or if the room temperature is low, your snail might enter hibernation as a natural way to protect itself. Dry conditions can also trigger this response. You'll notice this when your snail secretes a mucus layer that forms a protective seal, known as an epiphragm, over its shell opening. It's important to avoid disturbing your snail during this time. To gently encourage it to come out of hibernation, warm up the enclosure—it's a caring way to support your snail's health!

## Eggs

Having multiple African snails is a wonderful experience, as you'll frequently enjoy the delight of watching them lay eggs—typically between 100 and 500! If you're looking to manage the excess, consider crushing some of the eggs and offering them back to your snails. They're packed with nutrition, so it's a great way to keep your snails healthy while minimising waste.

## Transport

When taking your animals out with you, you must ensure their travel box is safe for them. Ensure there is enough room for your snail to sit comfortably, but not so much that they can be knocked around. If they are new to travel, then even putting a cloth over so that there is darkness to help calm them. Ensure it's well-ventilated, but also ensure there's no escape. Heat is vital; consider bringing a battery heat pack or a hot water bottle to help keep them comfortable.

## Diseases and Concerns

Giant African Land Snails are fascinating creatures with tough shells, yet they can still be quite sensitive. One key area to monitor is their shells, which may be susceptible to issues such as damage or deformities due to factors like calcium deficiency, incorrect humidity or temperature, or physical injuries. To keep their shells strong, it's essential to provide them with a proper intake of calcium, such as eggshells or cuttlebone.

Another important consideration is their skin, which can sometimes develop problems from poor hygiene or exposure to chemicals. A gentle cleaning routine using chamomile and warm milk can help, along with ensuring good ventilation and using purified, aged water to keep them happy and healthy.

If you have a Giant African Snail, it's crucial to monitor their health daily and conduct thorough research on potential diseases. Consulting a reptile veterinarian as needed will ensure your snail thrives in its environment!.