Frequently Asked Questions (Terrapins)

1. What do you do with the terrapins?
    - All our terrapins live outside in heated ponds. We currently have two ponds, a large one for the larger species of terrapins e.g. sliders, and a smaller pond for smaller species e.g. musks.

2. Do you rehome any of your terrapins?
    - We do rehome some terrapins like the musks and map turtles. We will never put up any sliders e.g. (Yellow bellied, Red eared, Cumberland) as it is illegal to rehome them, so they remain here at the rescue for the rest of their lives.

3. Who do rehome terrapins to?
    - We will only rehome terrapins to people who have the right knowledge and experience of looking after terrapins / turtles. We will only let our terrapins be adopted if the person can provide a set up as good as or better than us.

4. Do you do a home check when rehoming terrapins?
    - We will require proof of any potential homes for our terrapins, we don't come out for home visits but we do expect you to agree to a video call so we can check you have everything you will need.

5. Do they all get on with each other, do they fight?
    - All our terrapins get along just fine with each other. We make sure to provide them with enough space to move around and get away from each other if needed. Terrapins can show signs of aggression if they feel boxed in and too crowded. If we do see an aggressive terrapin, it gets removed from the pond and is housed in isolation.

6. Is it a heated pond/ or cold water?
    - Both our ponds are heated through summer and winter. During the winter the water is maintained at 23 degrees. In the summer the heater gets turned down, but we still leave it on to ensure the temp stays around 23 through cooler nights.

7. Why have you put a roof over the ponds?
    - We made the decision to put a roof on the pond mainly to protect the terrapins through winter and bad storms and provide them with a more stable ambient temperature throughout the year. It is also very beneficial to the terrapins as they don't have rainwater affecting the PH of the water in the ponds.

8. How do they get enough UV with the roof over them?

- Since we have added the roof, we are aware that the amount of UV the terrapins are receiving is considerably low so we are putting UV lights across the roof to make sure they get the right amount that they need.

9. What do you feed them, and how often do they get fed?
    - All the terrapins are fed a dried food mix which we make ourselves. The full list of what is in the food is available on our website at ftrescue.co.uk/terrapin-food they get fed once in the morning and once a night.
    - They also get lettuce and cucumber a few days a week.
    - Finally, they also get fresh uncooked prawns as an occasional treat.

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10. Can I tell mine apart from the others in the pond?
    - The likelihood of you being able to find your terrapin in the pond is very slim as there are so many of them and they all look very similar to each other.

11. What do you do if any of the terrapins lay eggs?
    - If we spot any eggs that have been laid, we DO NOT incubate them and we will remove them and place them in a lidded container they will then go in the freezer for 72 hours, afterwards they are disposed of appropriately. This is the most humane way of preventing breeding.

12. Can I touch and hold any of the terrapins?
    - No, we do don't allow anyone to hold or touch any of the terrapins due to risk of infection, and they are also very likely to bite.

13. Why can't I come into their enclosure if I'm wearing open toe shoes or sandals?
    - We absolutely cannot allow anyone in the enclosure without suitable footwear. In the enclosure there are lots of terrapins walking around freely and they may take a bite of your foot when walking past. You also have a high risk of tripping and falling in unsuitable shoes.

14. Why do you insist my child holds my hand and stays by my side?
    - We insist that all children are accompanied by an adult and kept very close by your side due to the risk of injury to your children. We do not take responsibility if your child gets bitten or scratched by a terrapin. There is also a chance that a young child could be spooked or trip over and fall into the pond so keeping them close and safe is something that must be strictly enforced. If you don't keep them close, we will deny you entry into the enclosure and or ask you to leave.

15. How many different species of terrapins do you have?

    We currently have a variety of different species at the rescue these are:
    - Yellow Bellied Sliders (Invasive Species)
    - Red Eared Sliders (Invasive Species)
    - Cumberland Sliders (Invasive Species)
    - Map turtles
    - Chinese stripe-necked turtle
    - River Cooters

- Painted turtle
- Musks
- One Common Snapping Turtle

16. Why do you leave the terrapins on their backs if they fall over?
    - Although some people find it distressing to see terrapins on their backs it is very important that they are left alone for a short period to try and turn themselves over. The reason we leave them is because as a rescue we strive to have the enclosure as close to nature as we can. When in the wild they have no choice but to turn themselves back over as there is nobody there to do it for them. When they are upside down, we watch and wait and will only intervene when necessary. We have noticed in the past that sometimes other terrapins will help their friends to flip back over as well.

17. Why do you charge a lump sum if I bring my terrapin in and it's ill.
    - If you are bringing your terrapin into us and it is ill, we will ask that you pay a contribution towards treatment. It is a one-off fee that helps us be able to care and treat it appropriately as we have so many terrapins in our care and could not continue to look after them otherwise.

18. Why do you charge to take our terrapins in, especially invasive species?
    - We charge you to bring your animal to us as this helps us to care for your animal. All money that comes in goes towards there heating, food and vet bills (if needed). This is especially important with the invasive species as when they come here, they must stay here for the rest of their lives.

19. Why can't you do regular personal updates, even if you know for sure it's mine?
    - We cannot do personal updates even if yours have been very identifiable. We do not have the staff or the time to sit and give out personal updates. Also, if we did it one for, we would have to do it for others so we just do not do it all. You can however watch our live cams and see if you can see your animal on one of them.

20. Why do you keep them all together?
    - We decided to house them together as it's a much better way of utilizing the space we have available, and it allows us to take in a lot more rescues. We did used to have tanks but with the amount we take in it just wasn't possible to continue using tanks.

21. Why do musk turtles have their own separate pond?
    - We decided to add a smaller pond just for the musks as we noticed some of them struggled with the depth of the main pond. The main pond is 4 ft deep whereas the musk pond is 1 ft so it's much easier for them to move around and get out of the water when they decide they want to bask.
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22. How do I pay/donate to the rescue?
    - You can donate to us through our website. If you go on and press the donate button it will then give you an option on how to donate. You can use

PayPal/bank transfer or buy something from our amazon wish list which we update regularly.

23. Can I do multiple donations?
    - Yes, you can. You can set up a monthly payment or you can do multiple amazon gifts from our Wishlist. Every donation goes straight towards the terrapins' care.

24. How long has the rescue been running?
    - The rescue has been running for 6 years.

25. Do they recognise each other, if they are separated from each other for a short time (match for life)?
    - Although you might have kept 2 terrapins together for many years when they come here, they do not stay with each other. If they are separated for a few weeks and then go back together they don't show signs of remembering each other. Terrapins are by nature solitary animals; they will happily live together with enough space, but they don't form friendships or relationships.

26. Can the snapper get out/bask?
    - Yes, the snapper is perfectly capable of exiting the water to bask on the platform, however he is currently very shy and will only come out if it's warm and sunny and will often jump back in if he’s spooked by someone walking past.

27. Do you have to top up the pond water to cover for evaporation?
    - Yes, we do have to top the water up every so often, it drops roughly 2 inches every week, but we like to frequently top it up anyway to ensure the water quality remains clear.