



San Diego Turtle and Tortoise Society Recommended Desert Tortoise Diet

Desert tortoises are vegetarians. They thrive on a varied plant diet that is high in fiber and calcium, low in phosphorus, and pesticide-free. Avoid plants high in oxalic or phytic acid. Focus on grasses, edible weeds, flowers and spineless cacti. Do not feed any animal protein to tortoises. Don't forget, tortoises also need plenty of sunlight and fresh water. The recommended diet guidelines below should help you maintain a healthier desert tortoise.

90% of the diet should come from weeds, grasses, and flowers such as:

Grasses such as:

Common Bermuda, Timothy, Buffalo,
Rye, Fescue, Kikuyu, Dallas, Bluegrass
Clovers (Trifolium spp.) and Clover Hay
Coreopsis
Daisy (English: Bellis perennis; African: Arctotis,
Dimorphotheca, Osteospermum)
Dandelions (Taraxacum officinale)
Endive
Escarole
Gazania
Geraniums
Grape Leaves (Thompson & Concord,
not Grape Ivy!)
Hibiscus: flowers, leaves

Hollyhocks (Alcea rosea)
Honeysuckle (Lonicera periclymenum): flowers
Mallovs (Malva spp.)
Nasturtium (Tropaeolum spp.)
Nettles (Lamium spp.)
Opuntia cactus (Prickly Pear)
Petunias
Rose: flowers
Sedums
Spider Plant (Chlorophytum)
Violet, Pansy (Viola spp.)
Wandering Jew (Tradescantia)
Watercress
Zinnia

Feed sparingly or as an occasional treat:

Beet greens
Bell pepper
Broccoli (cooked)
Brussel sprouts
Cauliflower
Collards
Fruit: apples, pears (no seeds), berries, mangos, plums, peaches (no pits), melons (except watermelon)
(Again, the emphasis here is on OCCASSIONAL.)

Kale
Mustard greens
Parsley
Romaine
Spinach
Swiss chard
Turnip greens