

Gopher Tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*)



Gopher Tortoise and the Law

As a threatened species, it is illegal to take, possess, transport, or sell gopher tortoises or their eggs except as authorized by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission; the relocation of gopher tortoises is discouraged to avoid spread of upper respiratory tract disease from infected to healthy populations.

Size: Up to 14 inches (35.5cm)

Weight: Up to 15 pounds (7kg)

Reproduction: 4 to 7 eggs laid in nest dug near burrow entrance. Young hatch in summer



**Gopher Tortoise
Distribution in
the Southeast**

Diet: Grasses, herbaceous plants, insects, carrion (dead animals).

Behavior: Average burrow is 15 feet (4.5m) long and 6 feet (1.8m) deep. Life span can be over 50 years. Communicate with each other through head-bobbing.