

Turtle Pellets

These types of food should be the staple of your slider's diet. Pellets are specially formulated for "optimal" nutrition but can carry a significant amount of protein. Feeding directions on these products are often too generous and owners often give in to begging. Be careful of them.

A general guideline used by most experienced keepers calls for the amount of pellets to be in proportion to the size of their heads (excluding their necks). Remember, pellets should be offered every day to hatchlings and only offered every other day for yearlings and adults.

Recommended Brands

- Tetra ReptoMin
- Mazuri Fresh Water Turtle Diet

Fresh Plant Matter

Fresh vegetables should always be offered, regardless if your RES shows interest in them. The right combination of vegetables can offer a balance of calcium and vitamins A and K. Aquatic plants are also beneficial, especially since it would be similar to what wild RES consume. Older RES especially should consume more vegetables and aquatic plants. Expect an adult to have a diet that is about 75% plant based.

Greens and Vegetables (Beneficial and recommended)

This is the main volume of an adult slider's diet. Younger RES should be introduced to these items early, though they may show no interest. A RES could safely receive these on a daily basis.

- Dandelion leaves
- Green leaf lettuce
- Red leaf lettuce
- Turnip greens (leaves only)

Aquatic Plants (Beneficial and recommended, *highly recommended)

- Amazon Swords
- Anacharis*
- Duckweed*
- Frogbit
- Hornwort
- Nasturtium
- Pondweed
- Water Fern*
- Water Hyacinth*
- Water Lettuce
- Water Lily*
- Water Milfoil
- Water Starwort

Animal, Insect, Fish Based Foods

Sliders are very omnivorous and will more than gladly take live prey. The variety of prey you can offer includes various insects, snails, small fish and worms. Offering live prey can be exciting for both the keeper and turtle but there are certain concerns and restrictions. Live prey may not contain much nutritional content and may harbor parasites and diseases. A small turtle can also be hurt from a larger prey or by one with a tough exoskeleton. Fish may contain thiaminase, an enzyme that destroys Vitamin B1 (thiamin). Shellfish may contain bacteria that causes shell rot and may be high in purines.

Aquatics - Live Prey (Moderate usage)

- Apple snails
- Pond snails
- Guppies
- Rosy red minnows

Insects & Worms - Live Prey (Moderate usage)

- Earthworms
- Silkworms
- Crickets (Pinhead) (preferably gut-loaded or dusted)

Other / Various (Use rarely)

- Boiled egg whites
- Boiled white chicken, turkey meat
- Salmon (Canned – in water)
- Tuna fish (Canned – in water)

Comment: There are several good on-line sources of reference material regarding turtle feeding (see redearslider.com/index_nutrition.html) and we encourage you to read them. You will also discover occasional conflicting information in addition to old, uninformed statements. It is your decision on how you want to interpret this content for feeding information. This feeding list and guide will receive regular updates to provide up-to-date recommendations.