



Indian Star Tortoise

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The [Indian star tortoise](#) (*Geochelone elegans*) faces severe threats from **habitat loss, illegal trade, and genetic disruption**, making its conservation a critical priority.

- **Appearance:** It has an **obsidian shell with striking Sun-yellow star patterns**.
- **Habitat:** It is native to the **Indian subcontinent** and is found in **northwestern India, South India, and Sri Lanka** in arid grasslands and savannahs.
- **Conservation Status:** Listed as **Vulnerable** under IUCN Red List, **Appendix I of CITES**.
- **Threat:** According to the [Wildlife Crime Control Bureau](#), **90%** of the trade of Star Tortoise occurs as part of the **international pet market**.
- **Genetic Study Insights:** Researchers identified two distinct groups of Indian star tortoises: **Northwestern (genetically stable)** and **Southern (genetically diverse)**.
 - **Microsatellite markers** were used to **track genetic relationships** and population changes.
 - Microsatellite markers are **short DNA sequences** that **repeat in a particular location** in the genome.

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