

# Japanese Pond Turtle

Nihon Ishi-game

**Scientific name** *Mauremys japonica*

**Classification** Testudines, Geoemydidae

**Distribution** Japan (except Hokkaido) and remote islands around Japan

**Feeding Habits** It is omnivorous and eats various creatures such as fish, amphibians, aquatic insects, crustaceans such as shrimp and crabs, earthworms, and aquatic plants

**Characteristics** The length of the shell covered its back is about 21 cm for females and about 11 cm for males, and the females are larger, the back is brown, and the body height is not so high, so it is suitable for swimming.

**Behavior and ecology** It can be found in Upper and middle basins of rivers, lakes/pond in/near mountains, wet lowland and paddy fields. They mate in water from autumn to winter and lay 1 to 12 oval eggs once or twice from late May to early August. The hatchlings are also known as "Zeni-game" in Japanese. It means a turtle in size like Japanese coins used during the Edo period, thus small baby turtles. This species is endemic to Japan, is required the conservation action because the population sharply decreasing due to overhunting and deterioration of the habitat.

