

WE LIVE WITH A TURTLE (AND A TORTOISE)

10:06:00

10:06:02 Has the dweller of this aquarium run away? Who lives here, anyway? There's no one in sight.

10:06:14 Jamie doesn't know what to think. But if you look carefully, you may see a tip of a nose peeping through the sand. What is this funny little creature? Is it a snake?

10:06:33 Look how it stretches its long neck out of the water to get a breath of fresh air. Did you guess by now? Jamie knows his friend – it's Elmo, *Trionyx sinensis*, a softshell turtle.

10:06:58 – Elmo is Elmo, and now he's hungry.

10:07:06 Jamie and Herbie seem to be more interested in Elmo's food than in Elmo himself. Elmo likes the same food as cats – fish.

– Yeah, but crayfish and mussels taste good as well.

10:07:29 Elmo has to be fed with long tweezers, because his jaws are sharp and extremely powerful.

10:07:37 – Now my stomach is full and I'll take a swim.

10:07:47 Elmo is an aquatic turtle who lives in an aquarium.

10:07:52 – Look how strong I am! I can lift a stump just like that!

10:08:04 This is *Testudo hermanni* or Hermann's tortoise. He is a land animal.

– I don't need a swimming pool. But I need access to fresh drinking water.

10:08:16 Hermann's tortoise lives in a terrarium which should be warm enough. His food is different from Elmo's.

- 10:08:24 – I'm a vegetarian. You should pay special attention to my food to help my shell and bones grow well. I want dandelion or clover greens, lettuce, stalks of root vegetables, water cress... Even fruit will do and mellow vegetables, melon, tomato, pineapple, apple, cucumber, squash, pear, carrot...
- 10:08:54 A tough staring contest Jamie vs. Elmo.
- 10:09:13 Aquatic turtles rarely haul themselves out of the water. That's why Elmo has a long neck and a muzzle that reminds of a trunk. Thus he can breathe without a need to surface. Elmo's shell is soft, like thickened skin. Softshell turtles get part of the oxygen they need from the water through their shell. Therefore water should be changed frequently and the aquarium should be equipped with a good filter.
- 10:09:51 – Look how fast I swim. Did you think I'm slow!
- 10:10:02 Dear audience, Elmo's special: disappearance into sand.
- 10:10:21 – Turtles and tortoises are very long-lived. We live dozens of years and if you take us as pets, remember that we will be your friends for life.
- 10:10:50 The End