



EDIBLE AND NON EDIBLE FLOWERS FOR TORTOISES

To ensure a balance, grow as many different varieties as you can.

GARDEN PLANTS

Malva - (mallow) leaves & flowers
 Lavertera - (mallow) - flowers & leaves
 Nasturtium - leaves & flowers
 Hibiscus - Flowers especially, also leaves
 Gazania - flowers & leaves
 Aubretia - leaves & flowers
 Wallflowers - (erysimum annual & biennial varieties) leaves & flowers
 Sedum spectabilis - leaves (other pink flowered alpines sedums are also consumed)
 Kalanchoe - leaves especially
 Pansies - leaves and flowers
 Hosta - leaves
 Hemerocallis - (day lily) flowers
 Anagallis Linifolia - (annual) leaves & flowers
 Sempervivum (house leeks) - leaves
 Meconopsis Cambrica (Welsh Poppy) - leaves & occasional flowers
 Mesembryantemums (annual) - flowers & leaves
 Nemesia - leaves & occasionally flowers
 Rose - petals only
 Mimulus (annual) - especially flowers
 Petunia - leaves & flowers
 Perennial Geraniums (alpine & dwarf) especially flowers, leaves also eaten
 Sweet Woodruff (galium odoratum)*
 Mysotis (forget-me-nots) - leaves consumed occasionally
 Pelagonium - leaves & flowers
 Begonia Semperflorens - flowers & leaves (suggest avoid all tuberous begonias however, as may be toxic)
 Echolozia (californian poppy) - flowers
 Ameria (thrift) - flowers
 Antirrhinum - leaves & flowers
 Osteospermum - flowers & leaves eaten occasionally
 Hebe - round or dark leaved varieties may be nibbled*
 Fushia - leaves & flowers eaten occasionally
 Corepsis - flowers
 Tagetes - Flowers
 Mimulus Aurantica - flowers
 Cornflower - leaves nibbled with young plants
 Opunia Cactus - spineless or semi spineless varieties
 Agave

* Dwarf or small hebes are ideal for tortoise garden planting providing both dappled shade and the occasional nibble. Sweet woodruff is more useful as a low growing evergreen shelter plant, but is occasionally eaten. In general, tortoises do not like herbs and actively avoid those with very strongly scented leaves.

Poisonous Plants

Keepers can be very worried about tortoises eating poisonous plants. In reality, the risk is small as tortoises will naturally avoid them.

Occasional cases of poisoning, even death, have been recorded through accidental ingestion of some garden plants, and it is therefore best to exclude these from tortoise habitats, or at the very least ensure they are not grown in close proximity with edible plants and weeds.

As a guide, common plants to be avoided include: Daffodil, Narcissus, Hellebores, Hypericum (often called Rose of Sharon, not to be confused with the Hibiscus variety Rose of Sharon which is quite edible), Hydrangea, Convallaria (Lily of the Valley), Euphorbias, Digitalis (Foxglove), Nicotiana (tobacco plant), Rhododendrons & Azaleas, Ragwort (senecio), Crocus, Dicentra (bleeding heart), Lupin (Lupinus), Vinca (Periwinkle), Peony (peonia), Rhubarb, Mistletoe, Aconite & Lobelia. In general plants which grow from bulbs, tubers & corms should be excluded as many although not all, are potentially toxic. Conifers which produce needles or pine cones should also be avoided.

However, if you see your tort nibbling a few leaves of, for example, sweet peas or impatiens (busy lizzies), don't panic. Many plants which are often listed as toxic are, it would appear, safe when taken in small amounts as part of a varied diet.

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