

# STOP



# BUYING OR CONSUMING GOLDEN COIN TURTLES



1

The Chinese three-striped box turtle, *Cuora trifasciata*, also known as the Golden Coin Turtle, is a semi-aquatic turtle native to southern China and northern Vietnam. It inhabits hillside streams and the surrounding forests.



2



It has three distinct black stripes on its upper shell and bright yellow on the topside of its head. The underside of its shell, the plastron, is hinged to allow complete closure of its shell as a means of self defense.

3



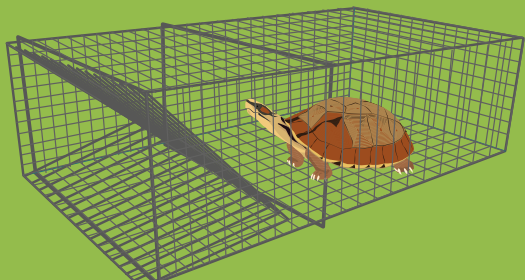
It is a long-lived animal and its Chinese name "Golden Coin Turtle" is believed by some people to convey good fortune, luck and longevity.

5



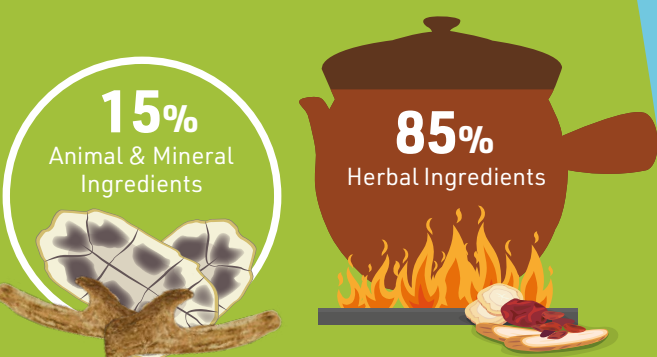
The Golden Coin Turtle has presumed medicinal curing properties, but these are not scientifically proven. Nevertheless, it has been marketed commercially to have properties for curing cancer and other challenging illnesses. Turtle shells and other turtle ingredients can be found in some commercial TCM products and Chinese dishes.

4



Unfortunately, the species is threatened with extinction because of overcollection for traditional medicine (TCM), food and the pet trade. It is considered a critically endangered species in the international Red Data List of Threatened Species. In Hong Kong, it is protected by law.

6



However, many professional TCM practitioners from universities and institutes have indicated that there are more than 3000 recorded Chinese medicinal ingredients and most of them are from plants. As there are plenty of possible non-animal substitutes, animal ingredients are rarely used nowadays.

7



Recent research has shown that the same or better nutritional benefits can be obtained with cheaper, common, non-endangered and sustainable food sources such as domestic animals, farmed aquatic animals or mineral supplements.

8



The species of Golden Coin Turtle found in Hong Kong used to be more widespread in southern China but now the Hong Kong population is probably the only breeding population remaining in the region.

A captive breeding programme is underway at KFBG, with future plans for reintroducing captive-bred individuals into the wild.

## WE CAN HELP SAVE GOLDEN COIN TURTLE (AND OTHER ENDANGERED TURTLES)



- 1 Avoid using turtle products wherever possible
- 2 Look for sustainable herbal substitutes
- 3 Think twice before buying any live turtles
- 4 Do not purchase endangered turtles as pets
- 5 Report illegal activities
- 6 Spread the word about protecting nature