

GERHARD WAGNER, Konstanz

Wie entsteht die Pigmentierung bei Europäischen Landschildkröten

How does pigmentation develop in European tortoises?

Abstract

The development of the pigmentation of the skin and especially the formation of the carapacial staining pattern by different groups of melanin producing cells (the melanocytes) are described for the Hermann's tortoise. The individual contribution to the adult pattern formation for each of the three different groups of melanocytes that are expressed in the skin, is clearly outlined. Furthermore, the possible influences of incubation and rearing temperature, UV-B light and possible genetically inherited factors are described and discussed. In addition, some hints are provided on how inadequate conditions of housing will affect the carapacial staining pattern, which may in turn help to identify poorly raised individuals by visual inspection. Finally, the overall and age-dependent changes in the pigmentation pattern of adult tortoises are described and discussed.

Key words

Testudines: Testudinidae, *Testudo hermanni boettgeri*, pigmentation development, influences, pigmentation

Author

Gerhard Wagner, gerwag@gmx.de