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Eineiige Zwillinge bei einer Steppenschildkröte (*Testudo horsfieldii*)

Identical twins at a steppe turtle (*Testudo horsfieldii*)

Abstract

Upon hatching, one out of 14 Steppe Tortoises (*Testudo (Agrionemys) horsfieldii*) eggs was shown to contain twins that were connected by their yolk sac. One of the twins had apparently died at an early developmental stage, whereas the other was alive and equal in size to its siblings from the other eggs. The dead twin was removed by severing the yolk sac at the 'dead' end and the remaining live hatchling developed without problems. Twin births have been documented in many chelonian species, but this appears to be the first documented case in the Steppe tortoise.

Key words

Testudines: Testudinidae, *Testudo (Agrionemys) horsfieldii*, incubation, twins

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