Herpetological Review

GOPHERUS POLYPHEMUS (Gopher Tortoise). **GROWTH**

ANTHONY J. GENEVA, Department of Biology, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York 14642, USA (e-mail: anthony.geneva@rochester.edu); and **RICHARD E. ROBERTS**, Florida Park Service, District 5 Administration, 13798 SE Federal Highway, Hobe Sound, Florida 33455, USA.

GOPHERUS POLYPHEMUS (Gopher Tortoise). **GROWTH**. On 3 January 2009 a large adult female Gopher Tortoise was captured at Jonathan Dickinson State Park, Martin County, Florida, USA (JDSP; 27.0061°N, 80.1288°W). This tortoise had been previously captured nearly 20 years (7134 days) earlier on 23 June 1989. At the time of first capture this animal weighed 7995 g and had a carapace length (CL) of 358 mm. Upon recapture this animal weighed 9163 g and had a CL of 375 mm. Both CL measurements were performed using calipers and each is the average of 10 replicate measurements (Timmerman and Roberts 1994. Herpetol. Rev. 24:64). The average growth rate of the recaptured tortoise was 0.87 mm CL/year. There exists a substantial literature on growth rates in Gopher Tortoises across the species' range (Ernst and Lovich 2009. Turtles of the United States and Canada. John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland. 827 pp). Ashton and Burke (2007. J Wildl. Mgmt. 71:783–787) report an average growth rate of 1.8 ± 1.9 mm CL/year for adult female tortoises from the Lake Wales Ridge of Florida, a habitat similar to JDSP.

The age of the JDSP tortoise was estimated based on counts of abdominal growth rings. At the time of first capture in 1989 age was estimated to be >29 years. Although this aging method has been shown to be unreliable in adults of some turtle species (Wilson et al. 2003. Herpetologica 59:178–194), we are unable to estimate age using growth models based on tortoise populations from central Florida (Mushinsky et al. 1994. Herpetologica. 50:119–128) or southcentral Alabama (Aresco and Guyer 1999. Herpetologica 55:499–506) because the JDSP tortoise exceeds the asymptotic limit of CL for both the 1989 and 2009 captures.

Submitted by **ANTHONY J. GENEVA**, Department of Biology, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York 14642, USA (e-mail: anthony.geneva@rochester.edu); and **RICHARD E. ROBERTS**, Florida Park Service, District 5 Administration, 13798 SE Federal Highway, Hobe Sound, Florida 33455, USA.