

# Vienna zoo breeds endangered batagur turtle

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The Schoenbrunn Zoo in Vienna said on Tuesday it has successfully bred one of the most endangered species of turtle, the Batagur baska, for the first time in captivity.

Two baby [Batagur turtles](#) were hatched in the zoo's [reptile](#) house at the beginning of May, the zoo said in a statement.

The Batagur baska -- which is listed as "critically endangered" by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature -- is a river terrapin that can grow to up to 60 centimetres (24 inches).

At home in the rivers of Myanmar, Thailand, [Vietnam](#), Cambodia, Indonesia, India and Bangladesh, its meat and eggs were long considered a delicacy.

But only 20 of them are now known to be in existence, including six in the Schoenbrunn zoo, the statement said.

With the help of Reiner and Peter Praschag, a father-and-son team of turtle experts from Graz, the zoo was able to create "exactly the perfect conditions for the females to lay eggs," the statement said.

"Without successful breeding programmes in zoos and research stations, the Batagur baska will be extinct within a few years," Peter Praschag said. "Time is running out very quickly for this species of turtle."

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