War Tortoise for 5e:

Based on
https://media.wizards.com/2018/dnd/downloads/UA_ShipsSea.pdf
And
Explorer's Guide to Wildemount
Version 0.1
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Stat block

50*50 feet (gargantuan)
1+ crew
30 passengers

Cargo Capacity
10 000 pounds in addition to its wooden platforms, homesteads and ballistas

Travel Pace
16 miles per 8 hour day
2 miles per hour
20ft per combat round

Hit Points and Armor Class:
Tortoise: 227 HP, AC 17 (22 while in shell)
Platforms: 300 HP, AC 15
Howdah: 25 HP, AC 12
Ballistas: 50 HP, AC 15

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	3 (−4)	25 (+7)	4 (−3)	10 (+0)	5 (−3)

Saving Throws Str +12, Con +10

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

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Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Goblin but can't speak

Amphibious. The tortoise can breathe air and water.

Massive Frame. The tortoise can carry up to 20,000 pounds of weight atop its shell, but moves at half speed if the weight exceeds 10,000 pounds. Medium or smaller creatures can move underneath the tortoise while it's not in its shell and prone.

Any creature under the tortoise when it retreats into its shell and falls prone is grappled(escape DC 18). Until the grapple ends, the creature is prone and restrained.

Mobile Fortress:

Howdah:
Large, wooden hut behind the neck of the tortoise
Armor Class 12
Hit Points 25
Immune to poison and psychic damage
One creature inside the Howdah (usually the captain or keeper) can handle the tortoise to take the move, bite, ram, shell defense or dash action. Per turn the tortoise can move up to its speed and take one 90-degree turn. If it takes the dash action, it can move and turn so a second time. If the Howdah is destroyed, its handling creature has to succeed on an animal handling check to control the tortoise instead.
Natural behaviour vs controlled by its handling creature: The tortoise can move, attack and use its shell defense independently of its handling creature but in combat its instinct is to retreat into its shell defense once it is threatened (frightened or damaged by 40 hp or more). In this case, however, the colony on its top is more vulnerable, immobile and easier to climb.

Platforms:
AC 15
300 HP
Immune to poison and psychic damage
Mounted platforms on top of the tortoise are on 15ft height, reinforced with walls for half cover and spikes on sides. Creatures of size Large or bigger within 5ft of the tortoise need to succeed on a DC14 DEX save or take 1d6+2 piercing damage. If the roped ladders are rolled up, smaller creatures than the tortoise which climb on top of it (Athletics or Acrobatics check vs Acrobatics check of the tortoise) need to succeed on a DC12 acrobatics check or take 1d6+2 piercing damage to climbing over the platform walls.

Weapons:
3 Ballistas: Armor Class 15, Hit Points 50, immune to poison and psychic damage

Ranged Weapon, needs 3 actions to attack: load, aim and fire, proficiency with martial weapons for at least one person who uses it
Attack: +6 to hit, range 120/480 ft., one target. Hit: 16 (3d10) piercing damage.

Tortoises typically include ballistas only when they are equipped for combat.

Crew:

In its swampy environment, a horizonback tortoise is self-reliant and can salvage food and water on its own. While a crew of 1 (a creature to handle it from the howdah) is sufficient solely for steering a war tortoise in its natural, swampy habitat over a certain amount of time, travelling overland outside of marches or even bringing it into battle requires the work of a number of able-bodied crew members. A war tortoise needs to be provided with food and water if it travels outside of swamps, the homesteads and other installations on top of the platforms need maintenance and the weapons need to be manned in battle.
A crew's skill, experience, morale, and health are defined by its quality score. A crew starts with a quality score of +4, and that score varies over time, going as low as –10 and as high as +10. It decreases as a crew takes casualties, suffers hardship, or endures poor health. It increases if the crew enjoys high morale, has good healthcare, and receives clear, fair leadership. A typical crew member uses the commoner stat block in the Monster Manual.

Roles:
Captain: issues orders
First Mate: supports the captain in issuing orders to the crew
Navigator: navigates
Keeper: handler, steers the tortoise and keeps it healthy
Bosun: repairs and maintains installations
Additional roles: medic and cook
up to 2 of these roles can be fulfilled by the same crew member and all positions can be fulfilled by several crew members (apart from the Captain and First Mate). During the calm days before the war for example captain and bosun can be fulfilled by one crew member while another one can be first mate, navigator and keeper all at once.

Mutiny:
A poorly led or mistreated crew might turn against its officers. Once per day, if a crew's quality score is lower than 0, the captain must make a Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check modified by the crew's quality score. If the check total is between 1 and 9, the crew's quality score decreases by 1. If the check total is 0 or lower, the crew mutinies. They become hostile to the officers and might attempt to kill them, imprison them, or throw them overboard. The crew can be cowed into obedience through violence, combat, or offers of treasure and other rewards. When the DM ends the mutiny, the crew's quality score increases by 1d4.

Land Leave:

Life aboard a tortoise is a constant wear on the crew. Spending time on the ground allows the crew to relax and regain its composure. If a crew's quality score is 3 or lower, the score increases by 1 for each day the crew spends on the ground.

Activities:

Draw a Map:

A tortoise's captain often undertakes this activity, producing a map that records the tortoise's progress and helps the crew get back on course if they get lost. No ability check is required.

Forage:

The character goes hunting and gathering, keeping an eye out for sources of food for crew and fresh greenery for the tortoise, making a Wisdom (Survival) check when the DM calls for it.

Raise Morale (Captain or First Mate Only)

The captain or first mate can manage the crew's time to grant extended breaks, provide instruction, and improve morale. Once per day, if the crew's quality score is 3 or lower, the captain or first mate can make a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. On a successful check, the crew's quality score increases by 1.

Navigate (Navigator Only)

The navigator can try to prevent the group from becoming lost, making a Wisdom (Survival) check when the DM calls for it. (See "Becoming Lost" in chapter 5 of the Dungeon Master's Guide for more information.)

Tend to the tortoise (Keeper only)

Once per day or when the DM calls for it, the keeper can tend to the tortoise and make sure it does not get sick, exhausted or injured by making a Wisdom (Animal handling) check. On a 15 or higher they can remove a level of exhaustion, cure a disease or heal the tortoise for hit points equal to 1d6 + the crew's quality score (minimum 1 hit point).

Noticing Threats

Use the passive Wisdom (Perception) score of the characters or the crew to determine whether anyone on the tortoise notices a hidden threat. The crew has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score equal to 10 + the crew's quality score. The DM might decide that a threat can be noticed only by characters in a specific area of the tortoise. For example, only characters inside a hut might have a chance to hear or spot a creature hiding on board.

Repair (Bosun Only)

The crew's bosun can undertake this activity. At the end of the day, the bosun can make a

Strength check using carpenter's tools. On a 15 or higher, each damaged component regains hit points equal to 1d6 + the crew's quality score (minimum of 1 hit point). A component other than the hull that had 0 hit points becomes functional again.

Stealth (Captain Only)

The tortoise's captain can engage in this activity only if the weather conditions restrict visibility, such as in heavy fog. The tortoise makes a Dexterity check with a bonus equal to the crew's quality score to determine if it can hide.

Hazards

Hazards come in two basic types: environmental hazards, such as storms or tricky terrain, and other events, such as a fire aboard the platforms or a plague outbreak.

Environmental Hazards

Landslides or faulty underground can hurt the tortoise or capsize it. Winds threaten to capsize the tortoise. Snowstorms batter tortoises that venture north too late in the year. These are all examples of environmental hazards that can last for days and demand a crew's attention.

Each day a tortoise spends involved in a hazard requires the officers to each make a special ability check, as shown on the Hazard Checks table. This check takes the place of any other activities that the officer might undertake and represents the officer's contribution to keeping the tortoise afloat.

Hazard Checks

Officer Check

Captain: Intelligence (warfare, siege engines or other comparable skills)

First mate: Charisma (Intimidation)

Bosun: Strength (carpenter's tools)

Keeper: Wisdom (Animal handling)

If there is no one available to make a check, treat the result as a 0. Finally, roll a d20 for the crew, using its quality score as a modifier to the roll. Add up all of these checks and then refer to the Hazard Check Results table. That table shows if the tortoise has met with disaster or success in surviving that day of the hazard.

Hazard Check Results Check Total Result

94+ Great Success. The crew's quality score increases by 1 for 1d4 days.

69–93 Success. The tortoise survives unscathed.

49–68 Partial Disaster. Each component takes 4d10 bludgeoning damage. The crew's quality

score is reduced by 1. The tortoise struggles, moving at half speed that day.

0–48 Disaster. The tortoise's components each take 10d10 bludgeoning damage. The crew's quality score drops by 2, as several members of the crew fall overboard and are lost. The tortoise wanders off course and struggles to recover its bearings, failing to cover any distance that day.

If you want to add variety to hazards, consider including some interesting complications.

Other Events:

In addition to rough and daunting weather, a tortoise might face a number of other threats. The hazards below serve as examples of what can go wrong on a tortoise. Each one requires a different officer to spend a day dealing with the hazard instead of engaging in other activity. As a rule of thumb, there is a 10 percent chance each day that one of the following events occurs.

Emergency Maneuvers.

The crew must react quickly to avoid a sudden threat. A sandworm passes below the tortoise, threatening to capsize it in its wake, or the tortoise is about to crash into a field of uncharted rocks during a foggy day. The captain must make a DC 15 Intelligence check. On a failed check, the tortoise or its platform take 8d10 bludgeoning damage from the collision. On a successful check, the captain's quick direction keeps the tortoise out of harm.

Conflict.

Life on a tortoise is a mixture of monotony, hard work, and sudden moments of terror. The stress can wear on the stoutest crew members. Sometimes, that stress turns into conflict among the crew. If dissension spreads in the ranks, the first mate's activity that day must be spent making a DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check to control the crew. On a failed check, the crew's quality score decreases by 1d4.

Fire.

A fire on a colony can render a tortoise unable to function. Pick a random component. It takes 4d10 fire damage unless the bosun succeeds on a DC 15 Strength (carpenter's tools) check.

Plague.

An illness sweeps through the ranks, perhaps caused by rats or insects that made their way aboard. A medic must make a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check. On a failed check, the crew's quality score decreases by 5 for 1d6 days.

Infestation.

Beetles, rats, or other pests infest the tortoise, threatening its food stores. The cook must make a DC 15 Constitution (brewer's supplies) check to save what food they can. On a failed check, the crew has disadvantage on any checks involving its quality score until the tortoise has a chance to restock supplies.

Combat:

Tortoise and crew share their initiative order position, as determined by the Captain's initiative roll.

Bite.
Melee Weapon Attack: +12 to hit, limited to 10 ft. reach of front facing side, one target. *Hit:* 28 (3d12 + 9) bludgeoning damage.

Shell Defense
(Recharge 4–6). The tortoise withdraws into its shell, and gains a +5 bonus to AC. While the tortoise is in its shell, its speed is 0 and can't increase. The tortoise can emerge from its shell as an action, whereupon it is no longer prone.

Full speed
Captain or Keeper, whoever is handling the tortoise from the howdah at the moment can make the tortoise go faster. The war tortoise can then take the dash action instead of the attack or shell defense action.

Fire at will:
As an action, the captain, first mate, or bosun aids the crew in aiming one of the tortoise's weapons. Select one of the tortoise's weapons that is within 10 feet of the officer. It gains advantage on the next attack roll it makes before the end of the tortoise's next turn.

Trampling:
Same as medium or smaller creatures can move underneath the tortoise, it can move over medium or smaller creatures. It does so provoking attacks of opportunity from them, however. At the end of its turn when the tortoise has moved 20 ft or more, medium or smaller creatures underneath it have to succeed on a contested Dexterity (Acrobatics) check against the tortoise to avoid getting trampled on and take 4d6 bludgeoning damage.
Trampling over medium sized or smaller objects without a Dexterity score requires a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check of DC 15 by the tortoise in order to damage them.

Ramming:
If moved 20 feet or more this turn the tortoise can as an action attempt to push large or bigger creatures or objects aside. This is an unnatural behaviour for the tortoise, however so an animal handling check with DC 15 is required by the creature who handles the tortoise from the howdah (usually the captain or the keeper).
If the animal handling check is successful, perform a contested strength check of the tortoise vs strength (athletics) or dexterity (athletics) of the targeted creature. If successful, the targeted creature gets moved into an unoccupied space.

If immovable objects are targeted this way, the tortoise makes a strength check against the object's AC instead. If the attack is successful, the object receives 16d10 bludgeoning damage. The tortoise and its platform on top each receive a quarter of that damage. A destroyed object becomes difficult terrain.

If the animal handling check is failed, the tortoise simply stops in front of the targeted creature or object.