herpy

AGAMAS

Forest Garden Lizard

Calotes emma

Calotes emma is a slender, diurnal agamid from the forests of South-East Asia that climbs in bushes and low trees and is recognised by the small groups of spines behind the eye and above the eardrum. It reaches 28-35 cm, is brown with dark bands and feeds on insects. Almost nothing is known about its care in captivity, so this guide draws on its habitat and on the close relative *Calotes versicolor*.

Family: Agamidae Former name: *Calotes alticristatus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**28-35 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**8-12 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Dry forest and rainforest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**100 × 50 × 100 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**25-29 °C**
Basking spot	**33-38 °C**
Temperature, night	**21-24 °C**
Humidity	**65-85%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**10-12 eggs**
Incubation	**60-70 days** at 27-31 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Not listed**
EU annex	**Not listed**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Almost nothing is known about the care of *Calotes emma*, and the species is rare in captivity. The care described here draws on the habitat (tropical forest, low branches and scrub, 30-150 cm above the ground) and on size.
TEMPERATURE	The species needs a clear gradient. The daytime temperature in the enclosure should be 25-29 °C, and the basking spot should be 33-38 °C, measured on the surface with an IR thermometer. At night it should be 21-24 °C.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Relative humidity should be 65-85 %. This is achieved by misting the enclosure lightly once or twice a day and letting the substrate and plants dry partially between mistings.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is diurnal and basks, so it needs strong light and UVB. Use a 5-7 % UVB tube (T5 HO) over the basking spot, corresponding to Ferguson Zone 2.
FEEDING	*C. emma* is insectivorous. In the wild it eats locusts, ants, termites, cockroaches, beetles, moths and larvae. Plant food is not documented.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The species is diurnal and quick and may dart out when the lid is opened. Give a new animal a couple of weeks in peace.
NATIVE RANGE	China, India, Bangladesh, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and Malaysia.