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AGAMAS

Central Netted Dragon

Ctenophorus nuchalis

Ctenophorus nuchalis is a small, diurnal agamid from the arid interior of Australia, with a dark, net-like pattern on a pale, reddish-brown body. It grows to 25-28 cm, digs into sand and is calm enough for gentle handling. The species needs a long, sandy enclosure, strong heat and UVB, and can live 6-10 years in captivity.

Family: Agamidae Former name: *Amphibolurus inermis; Amphibolurus nuchalis; Grammatophora inermis; Macrops nuchalis*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**25-28 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**6-10 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial and burrowing**
Habitat	**Desert and semi-desert**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**100 × 40 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 3 adults
Temperature, day	**25-30 °C**
Basking spot	**35-40 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-25 °C**
Humidity	**20-40%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects and plants**
Kept	**Singly, in pairs or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**5-6 months**
Clutch size	**2-6 eggs**
Clutches per year	**2-3**
Incubation	**56-77 days** at 28-32 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix III**
EU annex	**Annex C**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	A pair or a small group of up to three adults needs an enclosure of at least 100 × 40 × 40 cm (length × width × height).
TEMPERATURE	The air in the enclosure is 25-30 °C by day, and the cool end is about 25 °C. Under the basking spot the surface should be 35-40 °C, and it must not exceed 43 °C. Keep the temperature steady, with small fluctuations.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity should be low, about 20-40%; the figure is an estimate based on the habitat. The enclosure is dry and well ventilated, and the sand must not become damp, except in the egg-laying area.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is diurnal and needs strong light and UVB. Ferguson zone 3 is a good starting point; the zone is borrowed from other diurnal desert agamids.
FEEDING	The species is an insectivore that also takes a good deal of plant matter. In the enclosure, crickets and cockroaches are the staple, with mealworms and silkworms for variety.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The animal is energetic and curious, but calm in temperament and tolerates gentle handling. Keep handling short. New animals often rub their snouts on the glass and try to escape for the first while.
NATIVE RANGE	Australia.