herpy

ANGUIDS

Terrestrial Alligator Lizard

Abronia graminea

Abronia graminea is a small, emerald-green, arboreal alligator lizard from the cloud forests of southern Mexico. It reaches 20-30 cm, gives birth to live young and eats insects. It needs a tall, airy enclosure with moss and bromeliads, cooler temperatures than most terrarium animals and daily misting, without the air standing still. The species is threatened in the wild and is best suited to experienced keepers.

Family: Anguidae Former name: *Gerrhonotus gramineus; Abronia taeniata graminea*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**20-30 cm** total length incl. tail
Weight	**15-25 g**
Lifespan	**10-20 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Montane forest**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**50 × 50 × 75 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**20-27 °C**
Basking spot	**26-30 °C**
Temperature, night	**10-18 °C**
Humidity	**60-80%**
Water	**No water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Insects and worms/snails**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Live-bearing**
Sexually mature	**24-36 months**
Litter size	**2-12 young**
Clutches per year	**1**
Gestation	**180-240 days**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Endangered (EN)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

A pair needs an enclosure of at least 50 × 50 × 75 cm (length × width × height). Height matters more than floor area, but bigger is better, and 60 × 60 × 90 cm gives clearly more room.

TEMPERATURE

Abronia graminea does not tolerate heat. The daytime temperature should be 20-27 °C, and the basking spot under a weak spotlight may reach 26-30 °C. The animal is most active at 24-27 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Relative humidity should be 60-80 %, with the highest values at night and after misting. Mist the plants, walls and animals lightly almost every day, ideally with a pressure sprayer or a fogger that produces a fine mist.

LIGHTING AND UVB

The species is diurnal and needs UVB. The best option is natural, unfiltered sunlight, for example in an outdoor mesh cage in dry weather in summer, with shade and a cool surface so that the animal can move away.

FEEDING

Abronia graminea feeds on insects and other small animals. Offer crickets, grasshoppers, mealworms, cockroaches, snails, spiders and soft larvae, for example green caterpillars and fly larvae with a high calcium content.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

The species is quiet and shy. The animal spends most of the day sitting still on a branch or in a bromeliad and basks for short periods. It is not an animal to be handled.

NATIVE RANGE

Mexico.