herpy

ANGUIDS

Madrean Alligator Lizard

Elgaria kingii

Elgaria kingii is a robust, long-tailed alligator lizard from the south-western United States and north-western and western Mexico. It lives in desert, grassland, scrub and forest up to about 2,700 m and is active by day and at dusk. It lays eggs and needs a cool, dry to slightly moist enclosure with many hides and a cool winter rest. Its care is based on its close relatives.

Family: Anguidae Former name: *Gerrhonotus kingii*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**14 cm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**15 years**
Active	**By day and at dusk**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Semi-desert and temperate woodland and meadow**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**100 × 50 × 60 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**18-28 °C**
Basking spot	**30-33 °C**
Temperature, night	**12-16 °C**
Humidity	**40-60%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 2
Winter rest	**6-10 °C** 8-12 weeks
Diet	**Insects and worms/snails**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**18 months**
Clutch size	**5-15 eggs**
Incubation	**50-55 days** at 24-28 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Little is known about keeping *Elgaria kingii*. The care below is based on the climate of the range, the habitat and the size.
TEMPERATURE	The daytime temperature in the enclosure is 18-28 °C with a basking spot of 30-33 °C measured on the surface. A clear difference between the warm and the cool end is more important than high heat.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	The humidity should be 40-60 %, highest in the moist zone and at night. The enclosure should have both a dry and a slightly moist side, so that the animal can choose.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is diurnal, so the enclosure needs a basking spot and UVB. A UVB tube of weak to moderate strength corresponding to Ferguson zone 2 over one half suits its way of life.
FEEDING	The species mainly eats insects such as grasshoppers, caterpillars and moths, and it also takes scorpions. Movement triggers the capture. In the enclosure, feed crickets, grasshoppers, cockroaches, mealworms and snails.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The species hides under cover, but is also out in the open in the morning and evening. It is not an animal for handling. If it is grabbed, it bites hard and empties its bowels, and the tail is easily dropped.
NATIVE RANGE	United States and Mexico.