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ANGUIDS

Eastern Glass Lizard

Ophisaurus ventralis

Ophisaurus ventralis is a long, legless glass lizard from the coastal plains of the south-eastern USA. It grows to about 108 cm, more than two thirds of which is tail, and lives hidden in damp, sandy woodland and meadows. It resembles a snake. It needs a roomy enclosure with deep, diggable substrate, a warm spot and a varied diet of insects, snails and earthworms.

Family: Anguidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**45-108 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**4-15 years**
Active	**By day and at dusk**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial and burrowing**
Habitat	**Savanna and wetland**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**120 × 60 × 60 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**22-29 °C**
Basking spot	**30-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-22 °C**
Humidity	**60-75%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 2
Winter rest	**12-16 °C** 6-10 weeks
Diet	**Insects, vertebrates and worms/snails**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**24 months**
Clutch size	**5-17 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1**
Incubation	**50-65 days** at 26-29 °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 the care of *Ophisaurus ventralis*, and the species is rarely kept. The figures are based on the species' habitat and on the other glass lizards in the genus, and the text states where they are estimates.
TEMPERATURE	The daytime temperature must be 22-29 °C, with a basking spot of 30-32 °C measured on the surface with an IR thermometer and about 24 °C at the cool end.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	The humidity must be 60-75 %. The species lives on damp, sandy ground, so part of the substrate must be slightly moist while the rest dries out, so that the animal can choose.
LIGHTING AND UVB	In the wild the species basks and prefers partial shade. Provide a UVB tube in Ferguson zone 2 over the basking spot, so that the animal can choose to move into the light itself, and a UV index of 2-3 at the basking spot.
FEEDING	*Ophisaurus ventralis* is an opportunistic carnivore that mainly takes insects and other small animals, but also snails, earthworms, small snakes and eggs.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Ophisaurus ventralis* is calm but does not like being handled. When it is grabbed, it twists, may bite and sheds its tail easily, so never lift the animal by the tail.
NATIVE RANGE	United States.