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CAECILIANS

Boettger's Caecilian

Siphonops paulensis

Siphonops paulensis is a legless, burrowing caecilian from Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia and northern Argentina. It lives underground in open country, forest and gardens, and the female guards her few eggs, which hatch directly into small young. The skin releases a secretion that dissolves red blood cells.

Family: Siphonopidae **Mild skin toxins**

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**30-35 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**5-10 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Burrowing**
Habitat	**Savanna, dry forest and rainforest**
Skin toxins	**Mild** Wash your hands after contact and keep your fingers away from your eyes and mouth
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**50 × 30 × 35 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**22-26 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-24 °C**
Humidity	**90-100%**
Water	**No water dish**
UVB	**Not required**
Diet	**Insects and worms/snails**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Development	**Direct development (no larvae)**
Egg-laying site	**On the ground**
Eggs per season	**4-6**
Parental care	**Guards the eggs**

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 *Siphonops paulensis*. The close relative *Siphonops annulatus* is better known in captivity, and the care is based on it and on experience with other terrestrial caecilians.

TEMPERATURE
Siphonops paulensis is kept at 22-26 °C by day and 20-24 °C at night; the figures are borrowed from *S. annulatus*, which does poorly without heating.

HUMIDITY AND MISTING
The substrate should be evenly damp, and the air in the box is almost saturated, 90-100 %.

WATER AND WATER QUALITY
The species does not need a water bowl or an aquatic area. Condensation on the walls of the box is enough to drink from, and water is used only to keep the substrate damp.

LIGHTING AND UVB
The species lives underground and does not need UVB or other lighting. The room's ordinary daily rhythm with 10-14 hours of light is enough. The box should not stand in direct sun.

FEEDING
Earthworms are the staple and are taken by almost all terrestrial caecilians. Use earthworms of suitable size, e.g. compost worms, and cut them into pieces for small animals.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING
Siphonops paulensis lives hidden underground, and a healthy animal lies buried most of the time.

NATIVE RANGE
Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia and Argentina.