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GECKOS

Pristurus crucifer

Pristurus crucifer is a small, ground-dwelling gecko from the Horn of Africa and south-western Arabia. The body measures no more than about 4 cm from snout to vent. Like most of the genus, it is active by day, and it needs heat, strong light and UVB. The species is rare in captivity, so its care is based on close relatives.

Family: Sphaerodactylidae Former name: *Gymnodactylus crucifer; Pristurus stefaninii*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**4 cm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**5-10 years**
Active	**By day and at dusk**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Semi-desert and savanna**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 40 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**28-30 °C**
Basking spot	**38-42 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-23 °C**
Humidity	**30-40%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects and small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Incubation	**70-90 days** at 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 the care of *Pristurus crucifer*. The climate in the range is hot and dry, and the species lives on the ground and hunts from a lookout in the sun.

TEMPERATURE

Create a clear gradient. The cool end is kept at 28-30 °C, and under a spotlight a basking spot of 38-42 °C is made. At night the temperature can fall to 20-23 °C without extra heat.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

The air should be dry, about 30-40 %. A dry substrate and good ventilation keep the humidity down, and a hygrometer shows whether the level holds.

LIGHTING AND UVB

Pristurus crucifer is active by day and basks, so light matters greatly. Provide strong daylight and a UVB tube, for example a T5 tube with 10-12 % UVB, above the basking spot.

FEEDING

The species feeds on insects. Offer small feeder insects: springtails, fruit flies, small crickets and newly hatched cockroaches. Prey must not be wider than the distance between the animal's eyes.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Pristurus crucifer is a small, fast and wary animal that is not suited to handling. The tail can break off if you grab it. Pick the animal up only when necessary.

NATIVE RANGE

Saudi Arabia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya.