herpy

GECKOS

Western beaked gecko

Rhynchoedura ornata

Rhynchoedura ornata is a small, slender, nocturnal gecko from the sandy deserts of western and central Australia. It has a pointed snout with a beak-like look, lives on the ground and eats mostly termites. Almost nothing is known about its care, so the guide is based on the habitat and on relatives from the same regions.

Family: Diplodactylidae Former name: *Diplodactylus paraornatus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**4-6 cm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**5-8 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Desert and semi-desert**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**40 × 25 × 25 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**25-28 °C**
Basking spot	**30-34 °C**
Temperature, night	**16-22 °C**
Humidity	**30-45%**
UVB	**Optional** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**10-12 months**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Incubation	**46-60 days** at 27-29 °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 *Rhynchoedura ornata*, so the recommendations here are based on the habitat in the Australian desert and on the closely related *Diplodactylus galeatus*, which lives in the same type of landscape.

TEMPERATURE

The daytime temperature is 25-28 °C, with a warm spot of 30-34 °C, for example under a small lamp above a flat stone. Always measure with a digital thermometer, because the heat of a bulb varies a great deal.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Rhynchoedura ornata comes from dry regions and must be kept dry: aim for 30-45 % humidity. The enclosure must be well ventilated, and the substrate must be dry.

LIGHTING AND UVB

Rhynchoedura ornata is nocturnal and has no documented need for UVB. If you provide UVB anyway, it must be a weak light (Ferguson zone 1) with plenty of shade, so the gecko can withdraw completely.

FEEDING

In the wild *Rhynchoedura ornata* feeds mostly on termites and also on ants.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Rhynchoedura ornata is a calm, secretive and nocturnal animal. By day it is hardly seen, and at night it can be seen running around on the sand hunting.

NATIVE RANGE

Australia.