herpy

GECKOS

Northern leaf-tailed gecko

Saltuarius cornutus

Saltuarius cornutus is a large, nocturnal leaf-tailed gecko from the rainforests of north-eastern Queensland in Australia. The skin resembles lichen-covered bark and is studded with pointed tubercles, the tail is broad and leaf-shaped, and the toes have claws instead of adhesive lamellae. It needs cool conditions and is a species for the experienced keeper.

Family: Carphodactylidae Former name: *Phyllurus cornutus; Gymnodactylus cornutus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**14 cm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**10-15 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Rainforest and montane forest**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 40 × 80 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**20-24 °C**
Temperature, night	**15-19 °C**
Humidity	**55-100%**
UVB	**Not required**
Winter rest	**10-16 °C** 8-13 weeks
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**18-48 months**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Clutches per year	**2-4**
Incubation	**90-110 days** at 21-28 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix III**
EU annex	**Annex C**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	A pair of *Saltuarius cornutus* needs an enclosure of at least 60 × 40 × 80 cm (length × width × height), and preferably larger, because the animal is large and lives on trunks.
TEMPERATURE	The species comes from cool mountain forest. Keep the enclosure at 20-24 °C by day and 15-19 °C by night. Heat is the greatest danger. Prolonged heat in the high 30s is fatal to the genus, and *S. cornutus* probably tolerates less.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	The humidity must fluctuate. Mist the enclosure thoroughly in the evening, at least three times a week, so the humidity rises towards 100 %, and let it fall to about 55-60 % between mistings, so bark and substrate can dry out.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is nocturnal and lives hidden by day, so UVB is not necessary for *Saltuarius cornutus*, but a weak light during the day with a fixed daily rhythm is natural.
FEEDING	The species eats large arthropods such as cockroaches, woodlice and spiders, and in captivity ordinary feeder insects such as crickets and cockroaches work.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Saltuarius cornutus* is a calm, secretive and nocturnal species, which sits still on bark during the day. It is not an animal to be handled, and it can become stressed when picked up.
NATIVE RANGE	Australia.