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GECKOS

Middle Eastern short-fingered gecko

Stenodactylus doriae

One of the largest species in the genus *Stenodactylus*: a slender, nocturnal ground-dweller with long legs and fringed toes that buries itself in the sand during the day. Little is known about its care, but the species can be kept like its closest relatives in a dry sand enclosure.

Family: Gekkonidae Former name: *Ceramodactylus doriae; Ceramodactylus major; Stenodactylus major*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**5-8 cm** snout-vent length
Weight	**5-11 g**
Lifespan	**9-10 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial and burrowing**
Habitat	**Desert**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 40 × 20 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**24-29 °C**
Basking spot	**35-38 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-24 °C**
Humidity	**40-60%**
UVB	**Optional**
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly, in pairs or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**8 months**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Incubation	**60-80 days** at 27-30 °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 *Stenodactylus doriae*. The set-up follows its closest relatives *Stenodactylus petrii* and *Stenodactylus sthenodactylus*, which come from the same deserts.

TEMPERATURE
During the day the enclosure should be 24-29 °C, with 35-38 °C at the warmest spot, for example over a heat mat or heat cable under the base or under a lamp at one end.

HUMIDITY AND WATER
The air should be low to moderately humid, about 40-60%. Mist part of the enclosure lightly in the evening once or twice a week, so that there are damp patches and water droplets, and leave the rest dry.

LIGHTING AND UVB
The species is nocturnal and can live without UVB when it receives calcium with vitamin D3 through its food. A weak UVB light over part of the enclosure is optional, provided the animals can dig down into shade.

FEEDING
The staple food is live insects, mostly crickets, supplemented with waxworms, mealworms, small mealworms and flightless fruit flies. The insects should be no wider than the gecko's head. Feed in the evening, several times a week.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING
Stenodactylus doriae is not for handling. It is fast and fragile, and the tail can be shed. The animals come out after dark and spend the day in their tunnels. Males can make sounds.

NATIVE RANGE
Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iran, Iraq, Israel, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Jordan and Kuwait.