herpy

GECKOS

Golden-tailed gecko

Strophurus taenicauda

Strophurus taenicauda is a small, spotted gecko from the scrubland of Queensland, with a shiny golden stripe down the tail and red eyes. It climbs in branches, rests head down and smears a sticky, foul-smelling fluid on whatever grabs it. It suits the practised keeper who wants a species with plenty of personality.

Family: Diplodactylidae Former name: *Diplodactylus taenicauda*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**6-7 cm** snout-vent length
Weight	**5-8 g**
Lifespan	**4-10 years**
Active	**At dusk and at night**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Semi-desert and dry forest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**45 × 45 × 45 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**25-28 °C**
Basking spot	**30-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**19-22 °C**
Humidity	**30-60%**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly, in pairs or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**12-24 months**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Clutches per year	**4-6**
Incubation	**48-72 days** at 27-30 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

A pair of *Strophurus taenicauda* needs an enclosure of at least 45 × 45 × 45 cm (length × width × height), and a single animal can manage with a little less. A small group needs more space, especially more floor area.

TEMPERATURE

Strophurus taenicauda likes to bask under a spot lamp, just as it basks in the branches in the wild. By day it should be 25-28 °C low in the enclosure and 30-32 °C at the top under a low bulb.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Strophurus taenicauda comes from dry to semi-arid country, and there is no documented figure for the humidity. The 30-60% in the fact box is therefore an estimate based on the habitat. The enclosure must be dry most of the time.

LIGHTING AND UVB

Strophurus taenicauda sleeps freely on the branches by day and likes to bask, so give it UVB light. A real need has not been demonstrated in captivity, and with calcium and D3 in the food it can manage without.

FEEDING

In the wild *Strophurus taenicauda* eats small arthropods, especially cockroaches, crickets, grasshoppers, beetles, moths and spiders. In the enclosure crickets, small cockroaches, moths, flies and waxworms work.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Strophurus taenicauda is bold and curious and is not as shy as many other species. It often sits openly on a branch and is active at dusk and at night. It is not suited to handling, however.

NATIVE RANGE

Australia.