herpy

GECKOS

Common wonder gecko

Teratoscincus scincus

A gentle desert gecko from Central Asia and Iran with large, glassy eyes and a tail covered in large plates. When it feels threatened, it rubs the plates against each other so that it rattles like a little rattlesnake. It digs its own burrows in the sand and needs to be kept dry and given a cool winter rest in order to breed.

Family: Sphaerodactylidae Former name: *Stenodactylus scincus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**16-20 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**10-20 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial and burrowing**
Habitat	**Desert and semi-desert**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**90 × 60 × 45 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**24-28 °C**
Basking spot	**30-35 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-22 °C**
Humidity	**30-50%**
UVB	**Optional**
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**2 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-5**
Incubation	**60-110 days** at 28-29 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Not listed**
EU annex	**Annex D**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	A single animal or a pair needs an enclosure of at least 90 × 60 × 45 cm (length × width × height). For a small group it should be at least 100 × 60 × 60 cm.
TEMPERATURE	The species needs a clear temperature gradient. By day the cool end should be at 24-28 °C, and a warm area should reach 30-35 °C at the sand surface, for example under a heat bulb or a ceramic heater controlled by a thermostat.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	This is a desert species, and the enclosure should be dry, with a humidity of 30-50 %. Do not mist the whole enclosure.
LIGHTING AND UVB	As a nocturnal animal, the gecko has no great requirements for light, and it can manage perfectly well without UVB as long as the food is dusted with vitamin D3.
FEEDING	The gecko is an insectivore. Offer varied live food such as crickets, locusts and dubia roaches, and mealworms or waxworms as an occasional treat.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The gecko is calm and wait-and-see, but fragile. The thin skin can be torn if you grip too hard, and the tail is easily shed. Handle it as little as possible, and never grab the tail.
NATIVE RANGE	Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and China.