herpy

GECKOS

Thick-tailed gecko

Underwoodisaurus milii

Underwoodisaurus milii is a small, broad-headed gecko from southern Australia with a thick, carrot-shaped tail and a defence you will not forget: when threatened it rises high on its legs, opens its mouth wide and barks. It lives on the ground, takes ordinary feeder insects and is a good choice for anyone who wants to try a nocturnal terrestrial gecko.

Family: Carphodactylidae Former name: *Phyllurus milii; Gymnodactylus milii; Nephrurus milii*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**8-10 cm** snout-vent length
Weight	**14-25 g**
Lifespan	**10-15 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Rock-dwelling and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Semi-desert and rocky terrain**
Difficulty	**Beginner**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 40 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**22-26 °C**
Basking spot	**28-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**15-20 °C**
Humidity	**30-50%**
UVB	**Optional** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Clutches per year	**5-9**
Incubation	**58-65 days** at 27-29 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE
An adult can be kept in a low enclosure of at least 60 × 40 × 30 cm (length × width × height), and bigger is always better.

TEMPERATURE
The species needs a clear temperature difference between the two ends. Keep the cool end at 22-26 °C and the warmest spot at the floor at 28-32 °C. At night the temperature may fall to 15-20 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER
The species comes from dry regions and thrives at a humidity of 30-50 %. The enclosure should be neither constantly damp nor completely bone dry.

LIGHTING AND UVB
The species is nocturnal and manages without UVB as long as the animal gets calcium with vitamin D3 through the food.

FEEDING
The gecko lives exclusively on insects and other small arthropods. Offer a varied mix of crickets, locusts, dubia roaches and soldier fly larvae, and now and then mealworms or zophobas.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING
Many young animals are suspicious and bark, lunge forward and try to bite, but this is mostly bluff, and most calm down. Adults often become trusting and tolerate calm handling.

NATIVE RANGE
Australia.