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GECKOS

Border thick-tailed gecko

Uvidicolus sphyrurus

Uvidicolus sphyrurus is a small, thick-tailed ground gecko from the highlands on the border between New South Wales and Queensland in eastern Australia. It is nocturnal and lives under shaded rocks and logs in open woodland in a climate with hot summers and frosty winter nights. In captivity it is hardy and breeds readily when given a properly cold winter.

Family: Carphodactylidae Former name: *Gymnodactylus sphyrurus; Heteronota walshi; Phyllurus sphyrurus; Underwoodisaurus sphyrurus; Nephrurus sphyrurus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**6-8 cm** snout-vent length
Weight	**10-12 g**
Lifespan	**10-15 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Rock-dwelling and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Rocky terrain and temperate woodland and meadow**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 30 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 5 adults
Temperature, day	**20-25 °C**
Basking spot	**28-34 °C**
Temperature, night	**12-18 °C**
Humidity	**40-60%**
UVB	**Optional** Ferguson zone 1
Winter rest	**5-15 °C** 8-9 weeks
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly, in pairs or in groups**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**30 months**
Clutch size	**2 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-2**
Incubation	**59-73 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	*Uvidicolus sphyrurus* is rare in captivity, but hardy and easy to keep.
TEMPERATURE	Heat *Uvidicolus sphyrurus* from below with a heat mat or heat tape under one end, controlled by a thermostat, so there is a mild warm spot of 28-34 °C in the summer half of the year.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	*Uvidicolus sphyrurus* needs a damp hide, but not humid air throughout the enclosure. The sand under one saucer is kept constantly damp, so the animals can always find a humid microclimate, while the rest of the floor is dry.
LIGHTING AND UVB	*Uvidicolus sphyrurus* is nocturnal and lives hidden by day, so UVB is not necessary, but a weak UVB tube (Ferguson zone 1) above the enclosure can be used without problems when there are plenty of hides.
FEEDING	*Uvidicolus sphyrurus* is not fussy. The staple food is crickets of suitable size, preferably supplemented with cockroaches.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Uvidicolus sphyrurus* is nocturnal and spends the day hidden. When disturbed, it shows its threat display with stretched legs, a waving tail and a hoarse squeak.
NATIVE RANGE	Australia.