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IGUANAS

Common Basilisk

Basiliscus basiliscus

Basiliscus basiliscus is a slender, fast lizard from the forests along rivers and streams in Central America and northern South America, with a long tail, tall crests in the male and the ability to run on two legs across water. It grows to 45-80 cm, is diurnal and omnivorous and needs a tall, humid enclosure with a water section, many hides and UVB. It is shy and not suited to handling.

Family: Corytophanidae Former name: *Basiliscus americanus; Basiliscus barbouri; Basiliscus guttulatus; Basiliscus mitratus; Lacerta basiliscus; Lophosaura goodridgii*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**45-80 cm** total length incl. tail
Weight	**200-500 g**
Lifespan	**6-10 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal, terrestrial and semi-aquatic**
Habitat	**Dry forest, rainforest and wetland**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**120 × 60 × 120 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**25-30 °C**
Basking spot	**35-40 °C**
Temperature, night	**23-26 °C**
Humidity	**60-80%**
Water	**Water section**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Insects, fruit and vertebrates**
Kept	**Singly, in pairs or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**10-24 months**
Clutch size	**2-20 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-5**
Incubation	**56-90 days** at 28-31 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	An adult needs a tall enclosure of at least 120 × 60 × 120 cm (length × width × height), and larger is better. A male with one or more females needs a larger enclosure with several basking spots and hides.
TEMPERATURE	The air should be kept at 25-30 °C during the day, and the basking spot should have a surface temperature of 35-40 °C, measured with an infrared thermometer. At night 23-26 °C is suitable.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity should be 60-80 %. Mist the enclosure and foliage 1-2 times a day, or use a fogging or rain system on a timer, and measure with a hygrometer.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	The enclosure must have a water section that is large and deep enough for the animal to swim and dive in.
LIGHTING AND UVB	*Basiliscus basiliscus* is diurnal and needs UVB all day to produce D3 and absorb calcium.
FEEDING	*Basiliscus basiliscus* is omnivorous with a clear emphasis on animal food. Adults are given mainly insects: crickets, grasshoppers, cockroaches, large mealworms and the odd earthworm.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Basiliscus basiliscus* is shy and fast and rarely becomes truly tame. The animal is suited to being observed and not to regular handling. Stress shows as fleeing, snout rubbing against the glass and refusing food.
NATIVE RANGE	Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia and Venezuela.