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IGUANAS

Rose-bellied Lizard

Sceloporus variabilis

Sceloporus variabilis is a small, rough-scaled lizard from Mexico and Central America. The male has a pink patch with a dark blue border on each side of the belly, while the female is brownish and subdued. The species is diurnal, feeds on insects and lays eggs several times a year. It needs a warm enclosure with sun, UVB and plenty of hiding places, and it is fast and shy.

Family: Phrynosomatidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**10-15 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**4-5 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Savanna, dry forest and rainforest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**80 × 40 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**27-30 °C**
Basking spot	**38-42 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-22 °C**
Humidity	**40-60%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly, in pairs or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**2-7 eggs**
Clutches per year	**3-4**
Incubation	**55-70 days** at 27-30 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Little is known about keeping *Sceloporus variabilis*.
TEMPERATURE	During the day the ambient temperature should be 27-30 °C. Directly under a heat lamp there should be a basking spot of 38-42 °C, measured on the surface with an infrared thermometer.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity should be moderate, around 40-60 %. The species lives in both dry and humid regions, but always on sunlit spots, and the enclosure must not be permanently steamy. The substrate must not be bone dry either.
LIGHTING AND UVB	*Sceloporus variabilis* is diurnal and basks in full sun, so it needs strong light and UVB all year round. Use a UVB tube for sun-loving species (Ferguson zone 3) or a combined UVB metal halide lamp above the basking spot.
FEEDING	*Sceloporus variabilis* eats insects. Offer a varied diet of live insects such as small crickets, small cockroaches, grasshoppers, silkworms and mealworms.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Sceloporus variabilis* is fast, watchful and territorial. Males display with push-ups and head-bobbing and defend their space against other males. The species does not become tame and is not suited to handling.
NATIVE RANGE	Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica.