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LACERTIDS

Sand Lizard

Lacerta agilis

Lacerta agilis is a stocky, short-legged, diurnal lizard of sandy heaths, dunes and sunny slopes. It ranges from southern England to Lake Baikal, and the male develops bright green flanks in the breeding season. It grows to about 20 cm, feeds on insects and needs sun, a cold winter brumation and, ideally, an outdoor enclosure.

Family: Lacertidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**15-25 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**6-12 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial and burrowing**
Habitat	**Temperate woodland and meadow**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**120 × 60 × 60 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**22-30 °C**
Basking spot	**38-45 °C**
Temperature, night	**12-17 °C**
Humidity	**40-60%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 2
Winter rest	**4-6 °C** 4-16 weeks
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**In pairs or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**24-36 months**
Clutch size	**4-15 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-2**
Incubation	**40-45 days** at 24-25 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

Lacerta agilis does best in an outdoor enclosure in full sun, where the animal gets natural sunlight, a natural daily and seasonal rhythm and live prey. A pair can be kept in an enclosure of 2 × 1 m.

TEMPERATURE

Lacerta agilis loves the sun. The daytime temperature in the enclosure is 22-30 °C, and the basking spot needs a surface temperature of 38-45 °C, measured with an infrared thermometer.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Lacerta agilis comes from dry, open habitats, and the humidity in the enclosure is 40-60 %. Good ventilation matters more than humidity, and the substrate must not be constantly wet.

LIGHTING AND UVB

Lacerta agilis basks for most of the day and needs strong light and UVB. Outdoors the UVB comes from the sun.

FEEDING

Lacerta agilis is an insectivore. In the wild the diet consists of beetles and their larvae, grasshoppers, crickets, spiders, caterpillars, woodlice and flies. Ants are avoided.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Lacerta agilis is a solitary species that only meets conspecifics to mate. The males are territorial and chase rivals away from the best basking spots.

NATIVE RANGE

United Kingdom, France, Andorra, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria, Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Russia, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia and China.