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LACERTIDS

Dalmatian Wall Lizard

Podarcis melisellensis

Podarcis melisellensis is a small, compact, diurnal rock lizard from the coasts and islands of the Adriatic. It reaches 15-22 cm including the tail, has distinct pale stripes above the eyes, and the males occur with a yellow, orange or white belly and throat. The species is common in the wild, but little is known about its care.

Family: Lacertidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**15-22 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**5-10 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Rock-dwelling and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Rocky terrain and temperate woodland and meadow**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**100 × 50 × 50 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**22-30 °C**
Basking spot	**40-45 °C**
Temperature, night	**14-18 °C**
Humidity	**40-60%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 3
Winter rest	**8-12 °C** 8-12 weeks
Diet	**Insects and small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**In pairs or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**2-8 eggs**
Incubation	**35-45 days** at 26-28 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

Little documented knowledge exists about the care of *Podarcis melisellensis*, so the figures for temperature, humidity, incubation time and lifespan are borrowed from the related *Podarcis muralis* and *Podarcis siculus*, which have the same way of life and a similar climate.

TEMPERATURE

By day it should be 22-30 °C, and the basking spot should be 40-45 °C at the surface, measured with an infrared thermometer.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Humidity should be moderate: 40-60% by day. The enclosure must be able to dry out completely, because stagnant, humid air causes skin problems and fungus. Provide a shallow, clean water dish.

LIGHTING AND UVB

Podarcis melisellensis is diurnal and lives in open, sunlit terrain, so the enclosure needs strong heat and UVB light. The species belongs to Ferguson zone 3, with a UV index of around 3-5 at the basking spot.

FEEDING

Podarcis melisellensis eats small arthropods. Feeder insects can be crickets, small locusts, flies, fruit flies, springtails, spiders and woodlice. Mealworms and waxworms are given only in small amounts.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Podarcis melisellensis is fast and alert and flees when disturbed. Males are territorial, and two males of the same species together will fight, especially if one is orange.

NATIVE RANGE

Croatia, Slovenia, Italy, Montenegro, Albania and Bosnia & Herzegovina.