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LACERTIDS

Madagascar Girdled Lizard

Zonosaurus madagascariensis

Zonosaurus madagascariensis is an elongated, diurnal lizard from Madagascar with two pale stripes down the back and a tail almost twice as long as the body. It grows to 36 cm, is fast and alert, and eats both insects and a little fruit. The species needs a deep substrate with a damp corner, a warm basking spot and UVB. Its care is partly based on close relatives.

Family: Gerrhosauridae Former name: *Cicigna madagascariensis*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**30-36 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**10-15 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial and burrowing**
Habitat	**Savanna and rainforest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**100 × 50 × 50 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**22-28 °C**
Basking spot	**38-42 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-24 °C**
Humidity	**40-60%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects and fruit**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**2-5 eggs**
Incubation	**70-80 days** at 29-30 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	An adult needs an enclosure of at least 100 × 50 × 50 cm (length × width × height), and a pair at least 120 × 60 × 50 cm.
TEMPERATURE	The species needs a clear gradient. The air in the enclosure should be 22-28 °C during the day, and the basking spot should have a surface temperature of 38-42 °C, measured with an infrared thermometer.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	The relative humidity should be 40-60 %, with higher humidity in the damp corner and in the substrate. The species lives both in moist forest and in dry, open areas, so the air must not be desert-dry, but not wet either.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is diurnal and basks in open clearings, so it needs strong light and UVB.
FEEDING	The species is omnivorous with an emphasis on insects. In the wild it eats a wide range of insects and other small animals, but also fruit and berries.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Zonosaurus madagascariensis* is fast, curious and alert. It is shy of new things and retreats into a hide or digs down when startled. The tail can be shed and grows back, so never grab it.
NATIVE RANGE	Madagascar and Seychelles.