herpy

SKINKS

Italian Three-toed Skink

Chalcides chalcides

Chalcides chalcides is a slender, almost snake-like skink from Italy and North Africa with small legs, three toes on each foot and a tail at least as long as the body. It lives in sunlit meadows with dense, low vegetation, burrows and gives birth to live young. Little is known about its care, so this guide is based on the species in the wild and on its relative *Chalcides ocellatus*.

Family: Scincidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**25-40 cm** total length incl. tail
Weight	**9-20 g**
Lifespan	**10-15 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial and burrowing**
Habitat	**Temperate woodland and meadow**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**90 × 40 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**22-28 °C**
Basking spot	**32-35 °C**
Temperature, night	**15-20 °C**
Humidity	**40-70%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 2
Winter rest	**8-12 °C** 8-12 weeks
Diet	**Insects and small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Live-bearing**
Litter size	**4-9 young**
Clutches per year	**1**
Gestation	**80-100 days**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Little is known about the care of *Chalcides chalcides*. The species' habitat is known: damp, sunlit meadows with dense, low vegetation and a Mediterranean climate with mild winters and hot, dry summers.
TEMPERATURE	The species is diurnal and basks. Temperatures are not documented for captivity, and the figures here are estimated from the climate of Italy and from *Chalcides ocellatus*.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	The species lives in damp meadows, but not in water. Humidity should be moderate, 40-70 %, and the substrate should be slightly moist at depth and dry at the surface.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is diurnal and basks, so it needs strong light and UVB.
FEEDING	In the wild *Chalcides chalcides* eats almost exclusively ground-dwelling arthropods: spiders are the most frequent prey (over 40 %), followed by woodlice, beetle larvae and bugs such as shield bugs and cicadas.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Chalcides chalcides* is shy and lives hidden. In the wild it stays in dense vegetation and burrows, and in the enclosure it is seen mostly when basking or hunting.
NATIVE RANGE	Italy, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya.