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SKINKS

Monkey Skink

Corucia zebrata

The world's largest skink: a calm, arboreal herbivore from the Solomon Islands with a prehensile tail that works like a fifth limb. *Corucia zebrata* lives in family groups, gives birth to large, live young and requires a tall, humid and well-ventilated enclosure and plenty of fresh leaves. A species for the experienced keeper with patience.

Family: Scincidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**60-80 cm** total length incl. tail
Weight	**500-850 g**
Lifespan	**15-25 years**
Active	**At dusk and at night**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Rainforest**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**120 × 60 × 120 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-28 °C**
Basking spot	**29-31 °C**
Temperature, night	**21-24 °C**
Humidity	**70-80%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Fruit and plants**
Kept	**Singly, in pairs or in groups**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Live-bearing**
Litter size	**1-2 young**
Gestation	**180-240 days**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Near Threatened (NT)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

The species lives in the trees all its life and needs a tall enclosure. An adult skink needs at least 120 × 60 × 120 cm (length × width × height), and height is more important than floor area.

TEMPERATURE

The species needs moderate warmth. During the day the temperature must be 24-28 °C, and a warm spot high up in the enclosure may reach 29-31 °C. At night it may fall to 21-24 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

The humidity must be 70-80 %. It is maintained by misting 2-3 times a day or an automatic misting system, a damp substrate and live plants. A hygrometer at the animal's own height shows whether the level holds.

LIGHTING AND UVB

The species is most active at dusk and can be kept without UVB if D3 is given through the food, but a weak UVB light is recommended. Ferguson zone 2 is an estimate based on the species' way of life in shade and dusk.

FEEDING

Corucia zebrata is a herbivore and in the wild eats leaves, flowers, fruit and shoots of several plants, including *Epipremnum*, which the animal tolerates despite the many oxalate crystals. The diet must be varied and fresh.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

The species is calm and deliberate in its movements and seldom flees. If it feels threatened, it opens its mouth and hisses, and an adult skink can bite painfully through the skin.

NATIVE RANGE

Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.