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GECKOS

Ringed thin-tail gecko

Phyllurus caudiannulatus

Phyllurus caudiannulatus is a small, nocturnal leaf-tailed gecko from the forests around Bulburin in central eastern Queensland, Australia. The tail is narrow and round with pale rings. The species has a very small range and is near threatened in the wild.

Family: Carphodactylidae Published 16 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**10-11 cm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**5-10 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Rainforest**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**50 × 50 × 50 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**20-25 °C**
Temperature, night	**15-19 °C**
Humidity	**55-100%**
UVB	**Not required**
Winter rest	**10-16 °C** 9-13 weeks
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**18-36 months**
Clutch size	**2 eggs**
Clutches per year	**2-4**
Incubation	**90-110 days** at 21-25 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

About the species

Phyllurus caudiannulatus is a small, slender, nocturnal gecko that reaches about 10-11 cm from snout to vent. The species name *caudiannulatus* probably means "ring-tailed" and refers to the pale bands on the tail. The genus name *Phyllurus* means "leaf tail", but in this species the tail is narrow and cylindrical, not broad and flat as in *Phyllurus platurus*. It lives on trees, has claws on its toes and lacks the adhesive lamellae of other leaf-tailed geckos.

The species was described in 1975 and may be a composite species covering several populations. It is assessed as near threatened, and it is very rarely kept in captivity.

Distribution and habitat

Phyllurus caudiannulatus lives only in a small area of central eastern Queensland, Australia: the Bulburin area in the Dawes Range and Many Peaks Range south-west of Miriam Vale. The type locality is Bulburin, about 24 km south-west of Miriam Vale. The records lie close together between about 24.2 and 24.8 degrees south and 151.4 and 151.8 degrees east.

The narrow range is part of the reason the species is assessed as near threatened.

> **Native range:** Australia.

HABITAT

Phyllurus caudiannulatus is a nocturnal tree dweller. The Bulburin area holds the largest remnant of subtropical rainforest in central Queensland, and this is where the species lives. Forest type, altitude and climate at the species' own localities are not described in detail.

The species lays eggs and eats insects. The clutch size is two eggs.

Care

THE ENCLOSURE

Almost nothing is known about the care of *Phyllurus caudiannulatus*, so this guide is based on the close relatives *Phyllurus platurus* and *Saltuarius salebrosus*. The dimensions are borrowed from *P. platurus*: a pair is kept in an enclosure of at least 50 × 50 × 50 cm (length × width × height). Height and climbing opportunities are important.

Furnish the enclosure with vertical pieces of rigid bark and a few branches so the animal can move around. The species sits on bark, and hides on the floor are not necessary. Damp coconut fibre or a thin mix of fine sand and coconut humus can be used as substrate. The enclosure needs good ventilation with openings both at the top and at the bottom. Females about to lay need a deep egg-laying substrate (see breeding).

TEMPERATURE

The daytime temperature is 20-25 °C and the night 15-19 °C. The figures are a cautious estimate based on *Phyllurus platurus* (22-26 °C by day) and *Saltuarius cornutus*, and have not been measured for *P. caudiannulatus*. Keep the enclosure at the cool end. Heat is the greatest risk for leaf-tailed geckos, so place the enclosure in the shade and mist on hot days.

A cool resting period is part of keeping them (see breeding).

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Mist the enclosure thoroughly in the evening so that the humidity rises towards 100 %, and let it fall to about 55-60 % between mistings. During the resting period, mist every evening so the animals can drink the droplets. The substrate must not be constantly wet. The figures are borrowed from *Phyllurus platurus*.

Read more: Humidity, misting and ventilation

LIGHTING AND UVB

The species is nocturnal and hides during the day, and UVB is not necessary. Give the enclosure a fixed daily rhythm with dim daylight and darkness at night. Do not use strong spotlights or coloured night lights, and provide shaded areas throughout the day.

Read more: Lighting and UVB

FEEDING

The species eats insects, and common feeder insects such as crickets and cockroaches can be used. Feeders should be no larger than the animal's head. Give two to three insects per animal at a time, and dust them regularly with calcium and multivitamin. Remove leftovers the next morning. The tail stores fat and shows the animal's condition.

Read more: Feeder animals: keeping and breeding Read more: Calcium, vitamins and supplements

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Phyllurus caudiannulatus is a secretive, nocturnal species that sits still on bark during the day. It should be handled as little as possible, and never by the tail, which it drops.

Keep it singly or in pairs with only one male per enclosure, as with its close relatives.

Breeding

SEXUAL MATURITY AND SEXING

Males have a distinct hemipenal bulge at the base of the tail, which females lack. The age at maturity is not documented for *Phyllurus caudiannulatus*. In *Phyllurus platurus* the animals are not bred until they are at least 18 months old, and in *Saltuarius salebrosus* it takes 3-4 years.

MATING

In close relatives, breeding is triggered by a cool resting period. The animals are not fed for a week, and the daytime temperature is then lowered by 2-3 degrees a day to 10-16 °C. The resting period lasts two to three months, and the enclosure is misted every evening. Afterwards the temperature is raised to normal over a week. Take an animal out of the period if it loses more than a few grams. The figures are borrowed from *Phyllurus platurus*.

EGG-LAYING AND CLUTCHES

The female lays two eggs at a time. In related species two to four clutches are laid per season about a month apart. She needs an 8-10 cm deep, damp substrate of peat moss or coconut fibre that clumps but is not wet, and that must never dry out. She digs a nest, lays the eggs and covers them. After laying she is clearly thinner.

INCUBATION

Remove the eggs from the nest and incubate them in a mix of perlite and water in a 1:1 ratio by weight. In *Phyllurus platurus* incubation is at 21-22 °C, and above 25 °C the embryos may die, so stay at the cool end. The incubation time is not documented for *P. caudiannulatus*; in relatives it is 90-110 days.

The effect of temperature on sex has not been established. The hatchlings shed almost immediately after hatching.

Read more: Incubating eggs

REARING THE YOUNG

The hatchlings are kept in a small box, for example 30 × 20 × 20 cm, with kitchen paper as substrate and a piece of cork bark as a hide. Mist every other day, and offer the first food two to ten days after hatching. Give small insects, no larger than the animal's head, dusted with calcium and multivitamin. The young eat little in the first weeks and then thrive. Hatched siblings can usually be kept together, but separate them if one grows larger or becomes dominant.

Health and common mistakes

There is no documented overview of diseases for *Phyllurus caudiannulatus*, so the list is based on the close relatives. The main risks are:

- Excessive temperatures, especially on hot summer days. Keep the enclosure cool and shaded.
- Air that is too dry, which causes problems with shedding, where bits of skin stick to the toes and tail tip.
- A constantly wet substrate and stagnant air, which cause mould and skin problems.
- Calcium deficiency, if the food is not dusted.
- Weight loss during the resting period. Take the animal out of the period and build it up again.

The tail shows the animal's condition. See a vet with reptile experience if the animal loses weight, does not eat or looks limp.

Always ask someone who knows

This guide is a good place to start, but it cannot replace experience. Animals differ, and much of what matters most is learned from people who have kept the species for years. Talk to a breeder, an experienced keeper or a vet who knows reptiles and amphibians before you get the animal - and again if anything looks wrong.