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SKINKS

Spiny Skink

Tribolonotus novaeguineae

Tribolonotus novaeguineae is a small, shy skink from the lowland rainforest of New Guinea with rows of pointed, backward-curving scales down the back. It lives hidden in damp forest litter, is most active at dusk and lays only one egg at a time. Little is known about the care of this particular species, and it is best suited as a display animal.

Family: Scincidae Former name: *Zonurus novaeguineae* Published 16 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**16-20 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**10 years**
Active	**At dusk and at night**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial and burrowing**
Habitat	**Rainforest and wetland**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 45 × 45 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-27 °C**
Basking spot	**27-28 °C**
Temperature, night	**22-24 °C**
Humidity	**70-90%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Insects and worms/snails**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**36-48 months**
Clutch size	**1 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-6**
Incubation	**65-85 days** at 23-27 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Little is known about the care of *Tribolonotus novaeguineae*.
TEMPERATURE	The daytime temperature should be 24-27 °C, and a warm hide at 27-28 °C keeps the animal going, even though it does not bask. At night 22-24 °C is suitable.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	The humidity should be 70-90 %, highest at night, and the substrate must always be damp.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is active at dusk and needs no strong basking spot, but 12 hours of daylight a day maintains its daily rhythm.
FEEDING	*Tribolonotus novaeguineae* is insectivorous. The staple diet is crickets, cockroaches, earthworms, mealworms and silkworms, and waxworms and superworms are given in smaller amounts.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Tribolonotus novaeguineae* is an animal to watch and not for handling. When seized, it may make sounds, play dead, try to flee or drop its tail, and this stresses it.
NATIVE RANGE	Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.