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SNAKES

Speckled kingsnake

Lampropeltis holbrooki

Lampropeltis holbrooki is a medium to large kingsnake from the central and southern USA, black with a small yellowish-white spot on almost every scale, so the pattern looks like salt and pepper. It grows to 90-120 cm, eats rodents, lizards, frogs and other snakes, and is hardy and easy to keep. It is kept singly in a floor-type enclosure with a basking spot and moderate humidity, and can live for more than 20 years.

Family: Colubridae English name: Speckled Kingsnake Former name: *Lampropeltis getula holbrooki; Coronella sayi* Published 16 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**90-120 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**15-25 years**
Active	**By day and at dusk**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Wetland and temperate woodland and meadow**
Difficulty	**Beginner**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**120 × 60 × 60 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**21-28 °C**
Basking spot	**29-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-22 °C**
Humidity	**40-60%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Vertebrates**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**5-15 eggs**
Incubation	**60-70 days** at 26-29 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	There is little species-specific knowledge about the care of *Lampropeltis holbrooki*.
TEMPERATURE	The animal regulates its temperature by moving between warm and cool places, so the enclosure must have a clear gradient.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity should be 40-60 %, measured with a digital hygrometer in the middle of the enclosure. It is higher at the cool end and at night and lower at the warm end, and that is normal.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is diurnal and basks in the wild. It can manage without UVB, but UVB is recommended for the best welfare. This corresponds to Ferguson zone 2.
FEEDING	*L. holbrooki* is a carnivore and must be given whole prey. Mice are the standard food, and as the animal grows, young rats are used.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*L. holbrooki* is robust and tolerant. Give a new animal about 2 weeks in peace, and only start handling when it feeds regularly.
NATIVE RANGE	United States.