



The Eastern Blue-tongued Skink

This species is also commonly called the blue tongue lizard.

Natural distribution



This species occurs throughout eastern and northern Australia.

Physical and behavioural characteristics

- grow to a total length of around 45-60 cm
- long lived (20 –30 years)
- have smooth overlapping scales that give the lizard a blue-grey colouring
- have a distinctive blue tongue
- voracious feeders.

Environmental requirements for keeping in captivity

- require a reasonably large enclosure of around 1 m² in area
- require heating and suitable basking sites
- enclosure must have a range of temperatures from around 24⁰C to 35⁰C during the day and the heating should not exceed 20⁰C at night
- bark, leaf litter, shredded paper or purpose-made substrates must cover the floor of the enclosure
- some logs and rocks must be provided for them to bask on and to hide under.

Feeding and nutrition

Base diet

- a range of vegetables should be offered at each feed. These should be cut into small pieces and offered three times each week
- a powdered calcium supplement should be added to each meal and a multi-vitamin supplement (such as Herptevite) added once each week
- food should be placed into the enclosure around mid morning and any leftovers removed after 3-4 hours
- fresh water must be available at all times.

Enhancements

- good quality meaty cat food can be added to the vegetable mix once each week
- live insects such as crickets, mealworms and cockroaches, or snails that have been frozen then defrosted, can also be offered weekly.

Considerations when keeping Blue-tongue lizards in schools

- readily available and relatively inexpensive to purchase (\$30-\$50)
- very amenable to handling once conditioned
- most active during the day.

References

<http://www.reptileone.com.au/caresheets/Eastern%20Blue%20Tongue.pdf>

<http://australianmuseum.net.au/Eastern-Blue-tongue-Lizard>

Turner, G. (2001) *Keeping blue-tongue lizards*. Australian Reptile Keeper Publications, Bendigo.

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