

CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Lacertas are colorful tropical lizards from Europe and Asia. There are many different Lacerta species, including the jeweled, green, and Chinese. They are active and fun to watch.



Is a Lacerta the right companion animal for you?

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check "Yes" or "No" after reading the following statements:

1. I can accommodate a habitat requiring an electrical heat source.
2. I want a pet that doesn't need to be cuddled or touched.
3. I feel comfortable feeding live food to a Lacerta.
4. I can commit to providing proper care for a Lacerta.
5. A mature person will provide responsible and primary care for this companion animal.

If you answered "Yes" to these statements, a Lacerta may be the right choice for you! Continue reading about how to care for a Lacerta and consult with a PETCO associate to learn more. PETCO is committed to responsible companion animal care.

Average Size 6 to 18 inches long

Life Span 5+ years with proper care

Diet Provide a variety of insects, including gut-loaded (recently fed) crickets, mealworms, butterworms, superworms, waxworms

Feeding Feed adults every other day; juveniles daily; provide a multiple vitamin/mineral supplement once or twice a week and calcium daily

Housing Due to the varied sizes and growth rates of reptiles, and their individualized needs, we recommend you consult your qualified reptile veterinarian and a book on this species to determine it's specific housing requirements

Size – Appropriate size and shape habitat for adult Lacertas to accommodate normal behaviors and exercise

Habitat – Provide a hiding area; rocks and branches for climbing; a rock or log for basking; maintain low to moderate humidity with a light daily misting

Substrate – Use pelleted or mulch type; lizards may eat their substrate, if they do, switch to something they cannot eat, like paper or cage carpet, or an edible substrate; ensure substrate is deep enough for burrowing

Temperature – Temperature gradient is needed (100° F. for the warm end and 75° F. for the cool end, with a nighttime temperature of 75° F.); use an incandescent light or ceramic heater as primary heat source

Lighting – Provide UVB rays with full spectrum fluorescent light for 10 to 12 hours a day; incandescent bulb is needed for basking area if not using a ceramic heater

Water – Some Lacertas may not drink directly from a bowl and will rely on moisture from decor and in collecting pools in the tank; a shallow bowl of fresh, chlorine-free water should always be available for when they do drink

House adult males separately; do not house different species of reptiles together

Recommended Supplies

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat with secure lid | <input type="checkbox"/> Full spectrum fluorescent light | <input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basking rock and logs | <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin/ calcium supplement | <input type="checkbox"/> Substrate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humidity gauge | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-toxic plants, branches | <input type="checkbox"/> Shallow bowl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Book about lizards | <input type="checkbox"/> Incandescent light or ceramic heater | <input type="checkbox"/> Mist bottle |

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Normal Behavior and Interaction

Lacertas, like many lizards, can detach their tails in order to escape when they feel threatened; therefore never grab your lizard by the tail

Some lizards become highly stressed when handled; regular handling is not recommended

Habitat Maintenance

Thoroughly clean the tank at least once a week: set lizard aside in a secure habitat; scrub the tank and furnishings with a 3% bleach solution; rinse thoroughly with water, removing all smell of bleach; add clean substrate

Grooming and Hygiene

Always wash your hands before and after touching your lizard or habitat contents to help prevent *Salmonella* and other infectious diseases

Lizards regularly shed their skin; ensure appropriate humidity of habitat to allow proper shedding

Signs of a Healthy Animal

- Active and alert
- Healthy skin
- Clear eyes
- Eats regularly
- Clear nose and vent
- Body and tail are rounded and full

Common Health Issues

Health Issue (alpha)	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
Gastro-intestinal Disease	Runny stools, caked or smeared stool around the vent area, and loss of appetite caused by bacterial or parasitic infection.	Consult your exotic animal veterinarian.
Metabolic Bone/Vitamin Deficiency	Inability to absorb calcium due to insufficient UVB light. If untreated, can lead to a disorder characterized by deformities and softened bones. Swollen limbs and lethargy.	Provide ample UVB lighting and consult your exotic animal veterinarian.
Respiratory Disease	Labored breathing, runny nose, swollen eyes. Can be caused by temperatures that are too cold.	Ensure proper lighting, water, and basking conditions. If condition persists, consult your veterinarian.

Red Flags

- Weight loss or decreased appetite
- Swelling
- Bumps, sores, or abrasions on skin
- Paralysis of limbs or tail
- Mucus in mouth or nose
- Lethargy
- Labored breathing
- Abnormal feces

If you notice any of these signs, please contact your exotic animal veterinarian.

Sources

Keeping and Breeding Lizards by Chris Mattison
Lizard Care from A to Z by Richard D. Bartlett

Note: The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please refer to the above sources or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.