

Tropical Lizards

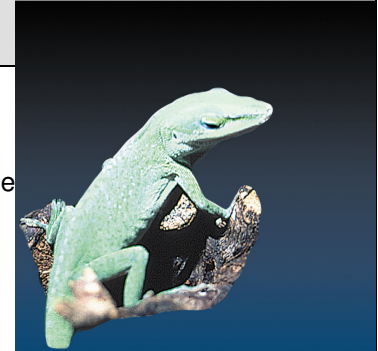
Includes green anole, water dragon and mountain horned lizard



CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Many tropical lizards change color, depending on temperature and mood. Tropical lizards include species of ameiva, anole, curlytail, Lacerta, swift, water dragon, mountain horned lizard and neon tree dragon. They can be great pets for those getting started with reptiles.



Is a tropical lizard 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:

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

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

Average Size 4 to 36 inches long

Life Span Up to 15 years with proper care

Diet Live insects, such as crickets and mealworms; appropriate sized thawed, frozen rodents, warmed to room temperature; may require live food; many require lots of water provided either in a shallow bowl, or by misting; Some species may also eat dark, leafy greens, chopped or grated carrots, squash

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 to accommodate normal behaviors and exercise

Habitat – Provide a hiding area; branches for basking; an incandescent light with access to a cooler area; maintain humidity of 60 to 80% by misting daily

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

Temperature – Temperature gradient (100° F. for the warm end and 70° F. for the cool end); recommend radiant heat; use an incandescent light or ceramic heater as primary heat source

Lighting – Provide needed UV 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 tropical lizards do not drink directly from a bowl and rely on moisture on non-toxic plants and in collecting pools in the tank; also provide large deep bowl of fresh, chlorine-free water for drinking or bathing (for semi-aquatic tropical lizards)

Males should be housed separately; do not house different species of reptiles together



Habitatititude™

Recommended Supplies

Depends on species

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat with secure lid | <input type="checkbox"/> Humidity gauge | <input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basking rock or log | <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin/mineral supplement | <input type="checkbox"/> Substrate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drip system – anoles | <input type="checkbox"/> Undertank heater | <input type="checkbox"/> Mist bottle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full spectrum fluorescent light | <input type="checkbox"/> Incandescent light or ceramic heater | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-toxic plants, branches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Book about tropical lizards | | |

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Normal Behavior and Interaction Never grab lizards by their tails, as they may detach it if pulled
Some tropical 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 humidity of habitat is appropriate to allow proper shedding; to facilitate shedding, provide a large container or tub so the lizard can immerse entire body

Pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems should contact their physician before purchasing and/or caring for a tropical lizard and should consider not having a tropical lizard as a pet. For more information regarding tropical lizards and disease, contact the Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/> and PETCO at <http://www.petco.com/pet care info/animal care sheets>.

- 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 *Anoles, Basilisks, & Water Dragons: A Complete Pet Care Manual* 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.