

Care Level

Beginner

Description

Crested Geckos were rediscovered in 1994, on the Isle of Pines, a small island off the coast of New Caledonia, after being presumed extinct for 100 years. These geckos are nocturnal and spend most of their time in low shrubs and trees. Their bodies are covered with tiny scales that are very soft and feel like velvet or suede. They are easily recognized by a triangular shaped head, large eyes, and a soft, spiky fringe extending down the back and around the eyes, giving them the appearance of eyelashes.

The Crested Geckos tail makes up half of its total body length. Under stress or threat from a predator, the gecko can detach its tail from its body. This does not harm the gecko but unlike many other species, the Crested Gecko will not generate a new tail.

A ratio of 1 male to 3 - 4 females may be housed together and a group of females may be housed together but never house males together.

Crested Gecko

Region

Crested Geckos are native only to New Caledonia in the South Pacific.

Sexing

Crested Geckos cannot be sexed accurately until they reach 3 to 4 months old. They reach sexual maturity at about 9 months of age. Once a male reaches maturity a large external hemipenile bulge will develop at the base of the tail. Females may have a slight bulge at the base of the tail or none at all.

This Care Sheet is for guidance only. It should not be used as the sole source of information and is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please contact Tacoma Tropical Fish & Pet or your veterinarian as appropriate.

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Crested Gecko

Rhacodactylus ciliatus



Care Sheet

Tacoma Tropical Fish & Pet

Housing

Terrarium

Minimum size is a 10 gallon terrarium with a screen lid or a screened cage 12"L x 12"W x 18"H for 1 - 2 juvenile or adult geckos. Breeding groups, containing a ratio of 1 male to 3 - 4 females can be kept in a 20 gallon aquarium or a screened cage measuring 18"L x 18"W x 24"H.

Substrate

Coconut fiber, unbleached paper towels, dampened moss, newspaper and bark; avoid cedar shavings, they are toxic to the gecko . Provide plenty of artificial and live foliage for climbing and hiding areas. Live foliage also helps maintain higher humidity levels which the geckos need.

Water

Use dechlorinated water such as bottled spring water (Never distilled). If using tap water use a reptile safe dechlorinator. A water dish will also help maintain humidity levels. Crested Geckos will readily drink from water droplets from misting their enclosure.

The habitat should be misted several times a day to help maintain a humidity level of 70% - 80%. A hygrometer should be used to help maintain proper humidity levels.

Crested Gecko

Housing

Lighting

Low wattage incandescent or fluorescent lights are suitable.

Temperature

A room temperature of 72° - 78° F is ideal. If the temperature drops below the ideal range then a substrate heater is recommended to maintain the proper temperature. The temperature of the habitat should never be allowed to exceed 83° F.

Maintenance

Remove left over food and feces daily.

Change water daily.

Thoroughly clean the tank once a week. Set geckos aside in a secure habitat. Scrub terrarium and decorations with a 3% bleach solution. Rinse thoroughly with water until the smell of bleach is removed. Add fresh substrate and decorations and return your geckos to their terrarium.

Tacoma Tropical Fish & Pet

Housing

Diet

Gut loaded crickets, commercial Crested Gecko powdered diet, and baby food fruit (apricot, peach and pears are a favorite).

Provide a vitamin/mineral supplement twice a week.

Life Span

Average life span is 10 + years.

Size

8 - 10 inches
(20.32 - 25.4 cm)

Other Information

On either side of the roof of your Crested gecko's mouth, there are white bumps. These are the calcium sacs. They are used to store extra calcium, which is used in the production of bone and eggshell. These calcium sacs are a good gauge to use for monitoring your gecko(s) vitamin D3 and calcium supplementation. Males tend to store much less calcium than females do, most likely because they do not have to worry about the production of eggshells.

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