

Smooth Knob-Tailed Gecko.

Nephurus levis

Thick-Tailed Gecko.

Underwoodisaurus milii

Lifespan: 10+ years

Size: Approximately 10cm

Enclosure: Minimum 60 x 45 x 45cm

Diet: Crickets, woodies and other live food

Care Level: Low



Enclosure.

The size and shape of a gecko's enclosure should be determined by which species of gecko is being kept as some are terrestrial (ground dwelling) and others are arboreal (climbers). The recommended minimum sized enclosure for one adult terrestrial gecko is 60 x 45 x 30cm, however a 90 x 45 x 30cm enclosure would be suitable to house between two–three adult geckos.

It is important that the enclosure has sufficient ventilation as well as a secure, lockable door or lid.

The enclosure should be furnished with multiple hides, artificial plants, timber or rock ornaments and a small water bowl. An absorbent substrate is also important such as a fine-grade reptile safe desert sand or coconut fibre.



Did you know

all native reptiles are protected in NSW and a Reptile Keeper's licence must be obtained from the Office of Environment and Heritage to own one as a pet.

You can apply for a licence online, or our specialist reptile staff would be more than happy to assist you in applying for your licence in-store.

Maintenance.

Geckos have a very specific set of requirements in regards to general care, however if all of these elements are provided they thrive in captivity.

Providing adequate temperature gradients within a gecko's enclosure is essential for their health and wellbeing. Most gecko species require a basking spot maintained between 28–32°C and a cool end of approximately 18–24°C.

Many species of gecko do not tolerate high temperatures, therefore the enclosure must be regulated with the use of a good quality thermostat and temperatures checked daily with a thermometer. Recommended sources of heat include the use of low wattage carbon fibre heat emitters, incandescent, or ceramic globes with larger glass enclosures. Heat mats and heat cables are also ideal for smaller plastic enclosures.

Being nocturnal creatures geckos do not require strong ultraviolet light (UV) like other reptiles do, however it is still important to provide UV to your gecko/s. A low output (2.0) UV light can be used for 2–4 hours during the day.

It is important to maintain high standards of cleanliness and hygiene within the gecko's enclosure. Daily 'spot checks' should be carried out, sifting substrate to remove any faeces, shed skin or uneaten food. A full substrate change should be carried out every 2–3 months (depending on what substrate is used) and the enclosure thoroughly cleaned with a reptile-safe disinfectant.

Geckos have delicate skin and do not tolerate handling particularly well, so care must be taken when removing them from their enclosure for cleaning. Geckos also require high levels of humidity and the enclosure should be lightly misted with water at least once every two days.

Diet.

Most Australian geckos are insectivorous reptiles that naturally consume a wide variety of invertebrates.

In captivity they can be fed on a number of commercially available insects such as crickets, woodies, silkworms and mealworms (small amounts). Appropriately sized insects should be fed to the gecko, as a prey item that is too large can cause blockages in the gecko's digestive tract or if not immediately consumed these insects may also chew and damage the gecko's fragile skin.

As a general rule, the size of the insect should be no larger than the space between the lizard's eyes. Mealworms should be fed sparingly as their exoskeleton can be difficult for geckos to digest.

Hatchling geckos should be offered food daily and juveniles and adults fed three to four times a week. Offering food in the late afternoon or evening is beneficial as this is when the geckos become most active.

A powdered calcium and multivitamin supplement should be dusted over the insects at least 1-2 times per week to provide the geckos with an adequate source of calcium and essential vitamins.

A small, shallow water dish should always be available and changed daily.



Common Health Issues.

Calcium Deficiency: Geckos require a calcium and vitamin supplement as part of their diet. If they do not receive adequate amounts of calcium, they may become deficient, leading to health complications.

Dysecdysis (abnormal shedding): Low humidity levels can sometimes result in a gecko having an 'incomplete' shed.

Tail Autotomy (dropping their tail): If geckos are not handled gently, or handled too frequently they may drop their tail as a defence mechanism. This causes significant stress to the animal and risk of infection.

Red Flags.

If you notice any of the following symptoms, please contact your vet.

- Loss of appetite • Diarrhoea • Lethargy • Retained skin around toes/eyes • Abnormal movements
- Disorientation • Twitching/tremors

Essentials.

Products required to care for your gecko:

Enclosure (min. 60 x 45 x 30cm)

Water bowl

Hide

Substrate

Artificial plants

Timber or rock ornaments

Heat fitting and globe

UV fitting and globe

Thermostat

Thermometer

Timer

Reptile disinfectant

Water sprayer

Sand sieve

Live food

Calcium and multivitamin powder

Feeding tongs



Kellyville Pets.

1-15 Millcroft Way, Beaumont Hills NSW 2155

02 9629 3282 | www.kellyvillepets.com.au