



Blue Tongued Skink *Tiliqua sp.*

- Blue tongued skinks are named for their thick fleshy blue tongues that are displayed as a warning or for defensive displays.
- Most species of blue tongue skinks are found on mainland Australia.
- Large, smooth scaled skink ranging from tan, cream colored, gray, to light brown with large brown, reddish brown, to orangish dorsal bands and stripes. Has a large, broad head, tiny legs, and characteristic thick fleshy blue tongue.
- If provided the proper care, blue tongued skinks can attain longevity of 15-20 years or more.

Size

Ranges from 6-9 inches as hatchlings, and 18-24” as adults.

Housing

Housing must be sealed and escape proof. Hatchling blue tongue skinks can be housed in a 15-20 gallon terrarium or enclosure. Adults require a minimum of a 30-40 gallon long terrarium or enclosure. Provide blue tongued skinks with substrates that enable burrowing such as aspen or Sani Chip shavings, cypress mulch, or Reptile Bark. Provide a hide box and artificial foliage, driftwood, rocks, or logs for ample basking and hiding opportunities. Provide a bowl or dish of fresh water

For basking, create a thermal gradient (or a warm side) in the cage/enclosure with an appropriate sized under tank heating pad, ceramic, or radiant heat emitter. Ideal temperatures for blue tongued skinks range from 75-80 degrees F on the cool side and 80-85degrees F on the warm, basking side. Provide a basking spot of around 90-95 degrees. Blue tongued skinks require overhead UVB incandescent and fluorescent lighting to thrive.

Spot clean the enclosure for urates, feces, or uneaten food at least twice per week. Be sure to periodically replace the substrate, clean, and disinfect the enclosure and its furnishings at minimum every 2-3 months.

Feeding/Diet

In the wild, blue tongued skinks are omnivorous, meaning they will eat both plant and animal matter.

Feed blue tongued skinks in captivity a mixed assortment of chopped up vegetables daily (including carrots, peas, collard, mustard, and dandelion greens, and beans). Feed green leaf lettuce sparingly if at all. Blue tongue skinks will also accept crickets, mealworms, superworms, roaches, and waxworms. Gut load these prey items by feeding them commercially available diets for added nutritional value. They may eat pinky mice as well, but feed them these sparingly, if at all. Feed them these insects in a bowl or dish every other day.

Provide calcium and vitamin D3 supplements in Blue tongued skink diets whenever possible.

Handling

As with many reptiles, hatchling and juvenile blue tongued skinks typically tend to be initially more nervous and nippy. Handle your skink gently and deliberately, but do not drop or injure the animal. Most adult blue tongued skinks will settle down considerably and become quite docile and personable pets to keep.

Also be sure to practice basic cleanliness and hygiene associated with proper husbandry after touching or handling any animals or animal enclosures to prevent the possibility of contracting salmonellosis or any other zoonotic pathogens

