



Sudan Plated Lizard *Gerrhosaurus major*

- The Sudan plated lizard is a moderate sized, heavily built lizard indigenous to rocky deserts, savannahs, and scrubland of Sudan and other areas of northern Africa.
- Sudan plated lizards can vary in color from grayish brown to reddish brown with distinctive bands of heavy, plate like scales giving this species its common name of “plated” lizard.
- These lizards are primarily diurnal (active during the day) and terrestrial.
- If provided the proper care, Sudan plated lizards can attain longevity of 10-15 years or more.

Size

Adult Sudan plated lizards can reach sizes of 15 to 28”.

Housing

Housing must be sealed and escape proof. An adult Sudan plated lizard should be housed in at least a 40-50 gallon long terrarium. Substrates to be used that allow for some burrowing are best, such as sand or sand/gravel mixtures, repti-bark substrates, or cypress mulch. For water, Sudan plated lizards can be misted 2-3 times weekly in addition to being provided an adequately sized water bowl. Also provide artificial foliage, driftwood, rocks, slabs, or logs for ample basking and hiding opportunities.

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 these lizards range from 72-83 degrees F on the cool side/ambient temperature and around 90-95 degrees F on the warm, basking side. Like most lizards, plated lizards will 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, Sudan plated lizards are omnivorous, meaning they will eat a variety of both plant and animal matter.

In captivity, plated lizards are largely insectivorous. They can be offered crickets, mealworms, superworms, roaches, and waxworms. Gut load these prey items by feeding them commercially available diets for added nutritional value. Plated lizards may eat pinky mice as well, and other minor sources of protein, but feed them these sparingly, if at all. They will also often eat a mixed assortment of chopped up fruits and vegetables daily (including carrots, peas, collard and dandelion greens, and beans). Feed plated lizards these insects/food items in a bowl or dish every other day.

As with many reptiles, also provide calcium and vitamin D3 supplements in these lizard’s diets whenever possible.

Handling

Sudan plated lizards are normally a docile species that can be handled and interacted with quite readily. As with any animal though, care should be taken to avoid dropping or overly restraining them to prevent injury.

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

