

Blue Tongue Skink Care Guide: A Comprehensive Overview for Advanced Herpetologists

Blue Tongue Skinks (*Tiliqua scincoides*) are captivating reptiles native to Australia and Indonesia. Their distinctive blue tongue, which they flash as a defensive display, has earned them the hearts of reptile enthusiasts worldwide. However, their care requirements can be complex, making them suitable only for experienced herpetologists.



So You Want a Blue Tongue Skink: Blue Tongue Skink Care Guide (Exotic Animal Care Book 2)

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 1168 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 50 pages
Lending	: Enabled



This comprehensive guide will provide a detailed overview of all aspects of Blue Tongue Skink care, including enclosure requirements, diet, health, and breeding. By following these guidelines, you can provide your skink with an optimal environment and ensure its long-term well-being.

Enclosure Requirements

Blue Tongue Skinks require a spacious enclosure that meets their specific needs. The minimum size for a single adult skink is 4 feet long, 2 feet wide, and 2 feet high. Juveniles can be housed in smaller enclosures, but you should gradually increase the size as they grow.

The enclosure should be well-ventilated and provide a variety of hiding places, basking areas, and climbing opportunities. Here are some key requirements:

- **Substrate:** Use a moisture-retentive substrate that can be dug in, such as coconut coir, cypress mulch, or a mix of both.
- **Hiding Places:** Provide several hiding places throughout the enclosure, including caves, logs, and foliage.
- **Basking Area:** Create a basking spot with a temperature gradient ranging from 95-110°F (35-43°C). Use a heat lamp or ceramic heat emitter to achieve this temperature.
- **Cooling Area:** Provide a cooling area on the opposite side of the enclosure where the skink can retreat to regulate its body temperature.
- **Water Dish:** Provide a shallow water dish that is large enough for the skink to soak in.

Diet

Blue Tongue Skinks are omnivorous and their diet should consist of a variety of foods. The majority of their diet should be made up of insects, such as crickets, roaches, and worms. You can also offer them fruits, vegetables, and occasional protein sources, such as cooked chicken or egg.

Here is a sample feeding schedule for an adult Blue Tongue Skink:

- **Insects:** 2-3 times per week
- **Fruits and vegetables:** 2-3 times per week
- **Protein sources:** 1-2 times per week

It is important to dust the insects with a calcium supplement before feeding them to your skink. This will ensure that they are getting the nutrients they need.

Health

Blue Tongue Skinks are generally hardy reptiles, but they can be susceptible to certain health problems, such as:

- **Metabolic Bone Disease (MBD):** This condition is caused by a lack of calcium in the diet. Symptoms of MBD include soft bones, deformities, and seizures.
- **Respiratory infections:** These infections can be caused by bacteria or viruses. Symptoms of a respiratory infection include sneezing, wheezing, and coughing.
- **Parasites:** Blue Tongue Skinks can be infected by a variety of parasites, such as worms and mites. Symptoms of a parasite infection include diarrhea, weight loss, and lethargy.

It is important to take your skink to a veterinarian if you notice any signs of illness. Early diagnosis and treatment can greatly improve the chances of a full recovery.

Breeding

Breeding Blue Tongue Skinks can be challenging, but it is possible with proper planning and preparation. Here are some key steps to consider:

- **Pairing:** Pair up a male and female skink that are both at least 2 years old.
- **Brumation:** Before breeding, the skinks should be brumated for 2-3 months. This will help to stimulate their reproductive cycle.
- **Courtship:** During courtship, the male skink will chase the female and try to bite her neck. The female will eventually allow the male to mount her.
- **Laying Eggs:** The female will lay a clutch of 5-15 eggs in a burrow or nest box.
- **Incubation:** The eggs should be incubated at a temperature of 86-88°F (30-31°C). They will hatch after 60-70 days.

It is important to provide the baby skinks with a proper enclosure and diet. They will need to be fed small insects and fruits and vegetables. As they grow, you can gradually increase the size of their enclosure and the variety of foods you offer them.

Blue Tongue Skinks are fascinating reptiles that can make wonderful pets for experienced herpetologists. By providing them with proper care, you can help them to live long and healthy lives.

If you are considering getting a Blue Tongue Skink, it is important to do your research and make sure that you are able to provide the proper care

for this unique and beautiful reptile.



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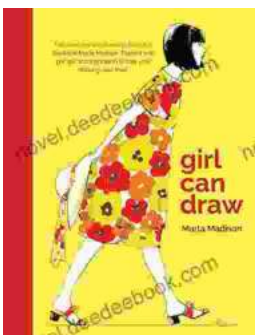
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