

Care Cards



HOUSING

Solomon Islands Skinks require a large terrarium, preferably one that is tall and allows ample room for branches for climbing. The housing should contain some suspended platforms and nest boxes for hiding. A nest box or hollow tree log should also be provided on the floor of the cage. The ground can be covered with moss, cork bark chips, dry leaves, or indoor-outdoor, turf-type material.

A full spectrum ultraviolet light alone or in conjugation with a black light is necessary for proper vitamin D3 synthesis. Remember to change the ultraviolet light every six months. A light and dark period is essential because these skinks are nocturnal by nature.

The temperature should be 85-90° F in the day and 70-75° at night. Skinks require a higher humidity level and a plastic shoe box with damp moss added to the cage is sometimes necessary to achieve this. Misting the cage with water in the morning and again in the late afternoon also will help.

NUTRITION AND FEEDING

Skinks are naturally coprophagic and keratophagic, which means they will ingest their feces or shed skin. This is important when you think the animal is constipated because there is no feces in the cage.

They are naturally herbivorous and enjoy the same type of diet as iguanas. Their salad should consist of:

- 60% Fresh green vegetables (mustard, turnip, or collard greens, kale, endive, or bok choy)
- 25% Other vegetables (squash, sweet potato, carrots)
- 15% Fruits and flowers (hibiscus, mulberry leaves, apples, melons, and berries)

Spinach and bananas, if fed, should be fed sparingly. Skinks do not eat daily and should only be fed three or four times a week. Place the salad on a piece of newspaper to prevent ingestion of the ground substance by hearty eaters. Because they are nocturnal animals, it may be necessary to feed them at night.

BREEDING

The gestation time for skinks is six to eight months. They are live-bearing animals and the female usually has only one baby; occasionally they can give birth to twins. The babies are born with the yolk sac still connected and will feed off this for the first day or two. Around the second to third day of life, the babies will shed their skin and then start eating on their own.

CAGE CLEANING GUIDELINES

All reptiles can carry salmonella and care should be taken when handling them or cleaning the cages. Basic sanitary routine is necessary when owning any reptile. Make sure to thoroughly clean the cage on a regular basis and clean the area you used to clean the cage on or in after cleaning the cage. Don't eat food or rub your eyes when cleaning the cage. Wash hands thoroughly with an antibacterial soap after cleaning the cage or handling the pet. Make sure small children learn and follow these hygienic guidelines.

