

CAL ZOO'S REFERENCE SHEET

LACERTAS

Latin name	Lacerta sp.	Maximum length	4 - 12 inches. (Includes tail)
Native to	Europe and North Africa	Approximate life span	5 - 8 years

GENERAL INFORMATION

Lacertas make great starter lizards. Lacertas are relatively calm for a lizard of this size. There are currently several species available to the reptile enthusiast. Most Lacertas will mix well with other species, provided they are of roughly similar size. Lacertas can be found in a wide range of habitats, anywhere from sandy beaches to rocky deserts and open forests. The Lacerta's prime defense against predators is to release its tail. Do not handle lizards by the tail, in many cases that may be all you are left holding. The tail will regrow, but it never comes back as nice as the original. Lacertas will actively breed in April. Some species have live birth, but most are egg layers. Egg laying will occur in June.

ENCLOSURE

Keep in well-ventilated aquarium. A 10 gallon aquarium with a screen top will work fine for 2 - 4 Lacertas. But of course the larger the better. Lacertas can be kept alone, or in groups consisting of 1 male and several females. Males kept together without adequate space are prone to fighting. Include lots of climbing places. Decorate with real plants or use Zoo Med REPTI FLORA™. A few pieces of cork bark will make a natural hiding place.

SUBSTRATE

Use sphagnum moss, pine shavings, or Zoo Med REPTI BARK™. You can very easily simulate the earth of the forest or desert floor by mixing sand with peat moss. Do NOT use silica sand, its dust is harmful to you and the animals! Decorate with Zoo Med DESERT TERRARIUM TREES, Zoo Med REPTILE VINES. If you choose to use rocks for decorating, be sure they are firmly positioned to avoid an unnecessary accident.

TEMPERATURE & HUMIDITY

Daytime temperatures should range between 80 - 85°F. A basking area should be provided with temperatures between 85 - 90°F. Nighttime temperatures should be allowed to drop as low as, but not lower than 75°F. The humidity level should be 30 - 40 %. In dryer climates an airstone may be used in the water bowl to raise the humidity. These animals may require a light misting 1 - 2 times a day.

HEATING

Reptiles need to be able to regulate their body temperature, so a temperature range must be provided. Use a Zoo Med REPTITHERM® UNDER TANK HEATER (U.T.H.). Leave it on 24 hours a day. UTH's take a few hours to reach their optimal temperature. For easy heat control, use a Zoo Med REPTI-TEMP™ RHEOSTAT in conjunction with the U.T.H.'s. They will also slightly help to increase the air temperature if needed. Always use at least one thermometer in all reptile & amphibian enclosures, although two thermometers are optimal. Place one thermometer on the cooler side, and one on the warmer side. A Zoo Med DELUXE ANALOG MIN/MAX THERMOMETER works great to show the high and low temperatures in a 24 hour period.

LIGHTING

The Zoo Med REPTISUN 5.0™ with its high UVB and UVA output is an excellent choice for lighting. The UVB is helpful but not essential, and the UVA will help with your new friend's mental well being. All reptiles and amphibians need a photo period (light cycle). A plug in timer (for your lights only, do not use a timer for your heating devices) works well to develop a regular photo period of 8 - 10 hours of light, 14 - 16 hours of darkness. Reptiles and amphibians cannot see the red light spectrum, so a red bulb is ideal for nighttime viewing of your Anoles.

FOOD & WATER

Lacertas can handle eating medium to large crickets. They will also eat small pieces of sweet fruit or lick fruit flavored baby food from a shallow dish. Dust food lightly with REPTIVITE™ every other feeding. Always feed your crickets assorted fruits and vegetables or a commercially prepared cricket diet 12 - 24 hours before feeding the crickets to your pets. Provide a shallow bowl for them to drink from. They should be able to easily get out of the bowl should they fall in.

NOTES

Always wash your hands before and immediately after handling reptiles and amphibians. Never leave live food long term with reptiles & amphibians. They can inflict severe harm, or even kill your pet. If your animals take some time to eat or you feed them at night, leave a slice of potato, carrot or dry dog food for the live food items to eat. Your local pet shop is an ideal source for reptile and amphibian related books and supplies. Please make sure you read and become familiar with any instructions provided with reptile support products you may purchase. For further information on reptiles and amphibians we recommend you read *REPTILES MAGAZINE* and *THE VIVARIUM*. California Zoological Supply hopes you have enjoyed reading this reference sheet on Lacertas. We hope that our guidelines will assist you with the care or possible purchase of your new pet.

This sheet may be copied in its entirety only.