

## **CARE OF CARNIVOROUS/OMNIVOROUS LIZARDS**

**HOUSING:** Juveniles may be kept in aquariums 2.5 times the length of the animal (including tail). Species that remain smaller as adults such as bearded dragons may be kept in enclosures as small as a 20 gallon long aquarium. Larger or more high-strung species (chameleons, water dragons) should be kept in very large enclosures with good visual security. Most of these reptiles are solitary in the wild, and housing them together (physically or visually) will cause stress leading to illness. Provide visual security in the form of a hide box or artificial or edible foliage. Particulate substrate small enough for the lizard to ingest is not recommended, with the exception of very fine sand-we like Jurassic Playsand. We have seen severe impactions with the sand substrates marketed by pet stores for reptiles. Provide humidity appropriate to species-drippers or misters are necessary for the tropical lizards.

**LIGHTING:** Provide a 12:12 light cycle for all reptiles. Reptiles must have total darkness at night in order to maintain a healthy feeding response. These lizards require a source of UVB, whether from a quality lamp or natural direct sunlight (best-30 minutes per week is enough).

**HEATING:** Varies depending on species. A gradient across the enclosure with the warmest point where the animal rests the most for basking. The coolest part of the enclosure should never drop below the low end of the range-this will affect the animal's ability to digest food, metabolize nutrients and fight off illness. Hot rocks should never be used.

**FEEDING:** Varies based on species-contact us for specifics, but in all cases, variety is key. We have a lot of good information and resources.

**VETERINARY CARE:** Annual exams with fecal exams done every six months. We recommend spaying or neutering large lizard species to prevent dangerous aggression in males and egg-binding in females. Please always call your lizard's veterinarian with questions and concerns. This is a better resource than pet stores or the internet.