Curly Tail Lizard Care Sheet

Common Name:
Curly Tail Lizard

Latin name:
Leiocephalus spp. Tropidurus spp.

Native to:
Peru, the Caribbean, and Cuba

Size:
Four to seven inches

Life span:
Five to eight years

General appearance:
There are about 20 species of curly tailed lizards. The name "curly tail" comes from the manner in which they rapidly twitch their tail. In general, curly tail lizards have a robust body with several different colors. Some curly tailed lizards have a dorsal crest.

Housing requirements:

Enclosure:
A minimum of a 15-gallon enclosure with a secure lid. Multiple climbing branches and a shelter for hiding should be provided for your curly tail lizard.

Temperature:
Daytime temperature should be maintained between 80° - 85°F. The basking area for curl tail lizards should be maintained between 88° - 90°F. Nighttime temperatures should be maintained between 75° - 77°F.

Heat/Light:
UVB lighting should be provided between 8 - 12 hours a day. The use of a timer can aid in proper lighting cycle. Ceramic emitters and infrared night-light can be used to maintain proper temperature. Hot rocks are not recommended.

Substrate:
Reptibark®, Bed-a-Beast®, sphagnum moss, also mixing tropical play sand and peat moss are all suitable substrates for curly tail lizards.

Environment:
Humidity should be maintained at 30% - 55% pending on the species.
Diet:
Curly tailed lizards will eat crickets, wax worms, and mealworms. They will also enjoy small pieces of green leaf lettuce and sweet fruit in a shallow dish. Fresh water should also be provided.

Maintenance:
The enclosure should be spot cleaned daily. A thorough cleaning should be performed on a regular basis. A 5% bleach solution is an excellent disinfectant. Be sure to thoroughly rinse the enclosure before replacing the substrate and placing the curly tail lizard back in the enclosure. Hand washing after handling the lizard or any cage furnishings is essential.

Other references or recommended reading:
California Zoological Supply 1996 Curly tail Lizard
Kaplan, Melissa. 2001 Curly-Tailed Lizard