

# arid skink

## care sheet



Most arid skinks are fast, agile animals. Arid skinks like to dig and burrow and need plenty of deep substrate in their habitat.

### facts

average adult size:	up to 18 inches, depending on species
average life span:	up to 15+ years with proper care depending on species
diet:	insectivore

*Will reach adult size in 1 to 2 years, depending on species and under ideal conditions; upgrade habitat size as your reptile grows.*



**Note:** The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, refer to the Sources section or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.

Developed with and approved by a qualified veterinarian.

# arid skink

includes African, five-lined, and schneider's skinks

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### diet

A well-balanced arid skink diet consists of:

- A variety of live insects, including gut-loaded (recently fed) crickets, mealworms, roaches and waxworms.

### feeding

Things to remember when feeding your arid skink:

- Fresh, clean, chlorine free water should be available at all times.
- Feed daily.
- Sprinkle food with calcium supplement daily and a multi-vitamin supplement once or twice a week.

### housing

- Size - Appropriately sized habitat for adult arid skinks to roam and exercise. Due to the varied sizes and growth rates of skinks and their individualized needs, we recommend you consult a book on the species to determine its specific housing requirements.
- Habitat - Provide a hiding area. Use an under-tank heater on one end of the habitat to create a warmer area. Maintain less than 50% humidity; however,

mist as needed to keep the substrate moist.

- Substrate - Coconut fiber or mulch; arid skinks like to dig and burrow.
- Temperature - Temperature gradient (100°F for the warm end and 70°F for the cool end). Use an incandescent light or ceramic heater as primary heat source.
- Lighting - UVB rays with full spectrum lighting for 10 to 12 hours a day is required. A basking bulb can be used for basking area during daylight hours only.
- House adult arid skinks separately and do **not** house different reptile species together.

### normal behavior

- Arid skinks spend part of the day in a hiding area in their habitat.
- Male arid skinks are territorial and should be housed separately.
- Never grab a skink by its tail as they may drop their tail.

### habitat maintenance

- Thoroughly clean and disinfect the habitat at least once a week: place skink in a secure habitat; scrub the tank and furnishings with a 3% bleach solution; rinse thoroughly with water, removing all traces of bleach smell; dry the tank and furnishings completely and add clean substrate.

### grooming and hygiene

- Skinks regularly shed their skin; ensure humidity of habitat is at appropriate level to allow proper shedding. To facilitate shedding, bathe in a large container that allows the skink to immerse its entire body or provide a shed box, a hide box with sphagnum moss, that will aid in the shedding process.

### signs of a healthy animal

- Active and alert
- Clear eyes
- Body and tail are filled out
- Healthy skin
- Clear nose and vent
- Eats regularly

### red flags

- Weight loss or decreased appetite
- Mucus in mouth or nose
- Swelling
- Lethargic
- Bumps, sores or abrasions on skin
- Labored breathing
- Paralysis of limbs
- Abnormal feces

If you notice any of these signs, contact your veterinarian.

### common health issues

Health Issue	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
Gastro-intestinal disease	Runny stools, caked or smeared stool around the vent area and loss of appetite caused by bacterial or parasitic infection.	Consult your veterinarian.
Metabolic bone/vitamin deficiency	Inability to absorb calcium due to insufficient UVB light, or not being provided the proper amount of calcium/vitamin D supplements. If untreated, can lead to a disorder characterized by deformities and softened bones. Swollen limbs and lethargy.	Consult your veterinarian and provide ample UVB lighting and proper calcium/vitamin supplements.
Respiratory disease	Labored breathing and mucus in the mouth or nose. Can be caused by a habitat that is too cold or damp.	Consult your veterinarian and ensure habitat is the proper temperature.

## shopping list for needed supplies

- Appropriately sized habitat
- Substrate
- Moss
- Water dish
- Mealworm dish
- Hideaway place
- Climbing décor
- Plants
- Heat light
- Heat fixture
- Under-tank heater (optional)
- UVB lighting and fixture
- Vitamin supplement
- Calcium supplement
- Cricket keeper
- Cricket food
- Cricket quencher
- Book about skinks

## sources

Ask a store partner about Petco's selection of books on skinks and the variety of private brand products available for the care and happiness of your new pet. All private brand products carry a 100% money-back guarantee.

Because all reptiles are potential carriers of infectious diseases, such as *Salmonella*, always wash your hands before and after handling your reptile or habitat contents to help prevent the potential spread of disease.

Pregnant women, children under the age of 5, senior citizens and people with weakened immune systems should contact their physician before purchasing or caring for reptiles and should consider not having a reptile as a pet.

Go to [cdc.gov/healthypets](http://cdc.gov/healthypets) and [petco.com/caresheet](http://petco.com/caresheet) for more information about small animals and disease.

This Care Sheet can cover the care needs of other species. Go to [petco.com](http://petco.com) for more information.

