



A BETTER LIFE FOR EXOTIC PETS

CRESTED GECKO CARE GUIDE

Native to: Found only on the island of New Caledonia, in the southern areas.

Habitat: Mainly inhabit the canopy's of the rainforests.

Behaviour: Nocturnal and arboreal, they are generally placid, but skittish and very good jumpers.

Social: Solitary.

Size: Range between 4-7 inches, including tail.

Lifespan: Anywhere between 15-20 years.



ANATOMY

Dropped Tails:

Cresties are capable of dropping their tails as a defense mechanism. Unfortunately, once dropped, they do not grow back!

Eyelash Geckos:

Cresties are known for their decorative dorsal areas, with a crest that runs from the top of their eye down to the base of their tail.

Eyes Wide:

These geckos do not have eyelids, so to keep their eyes clean, they regularly lick them.

Calcium Sacs:

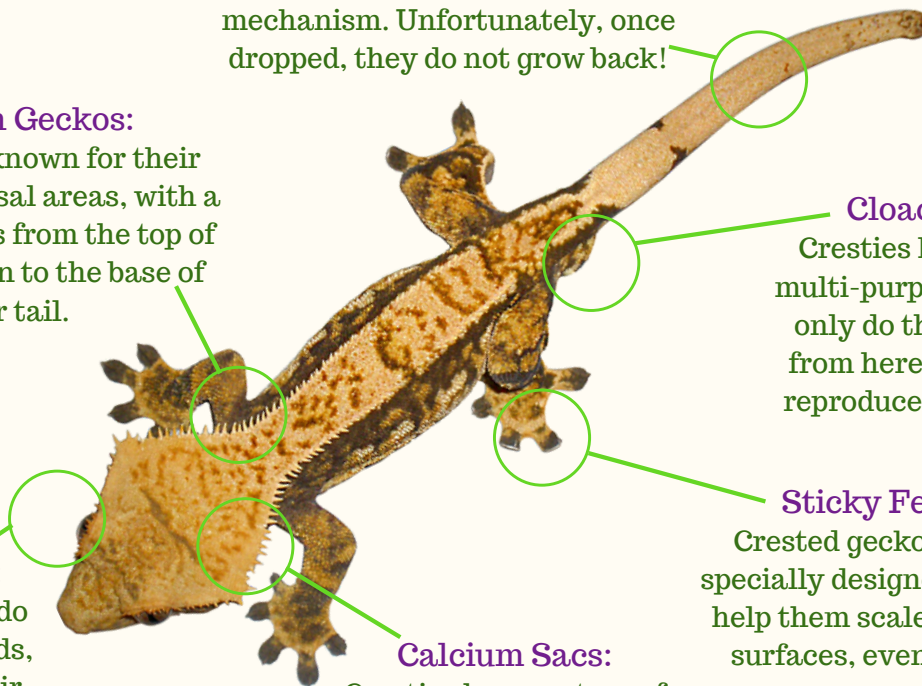
Cresties have a store of calcium within two sacs inside their mouth. This is usually needed for females laying eggs,

Cloaca-what?

Cresties have a single, multi-purpose orifice. Not only do they poo & wee from here, but they also reproduce from here too.

Sticky Feet:

Crested geckos have specially designed feet to help them scale upright surfaces, even glass!



DIETS

Crested geckos in the wild eat a diet consisting of insects and nectar.

It is important to feed a high-quality crested gecko diet (CGD). This is a powder that is mixed with water to create a paste, which contains the main components of their diet - this should be refreshed every other day.

Insects should be offered 3 times a week when the gecko is young, decreasing to once a week when mature. It is not uncommon for them to reject insects completely when adults, which is fine. CGD is the most important thing for them to eat.

We feed our crested geckos on different flavours of fresh CGD every Mon, Wed & Fri. Live food is offered on a Friday.

STAPLE FEEDER ITEMS



Repashy

This range of CGD contains everything needed for a crestie.



Hoppers



Dubias



Crickets



Pangea

This range of CGD is equally high-quality, with lots of flavours.

GUT-LOADING

To ensure the live feeders contain the right nutrients, they should be fed an appropriate diet of fruit, vegetables and meal prior to offering them to your gecko.

Our insects are fed on fresh fruit and vegetables, and leftover CGD

SUPPLEMENTS

Calcium:

They will require additional calcium to promote bone growth and development.

I ensure that insects are dusted in calcium powder just before feeding.

This is done once a week with youngsters and once every three weeks for adults.

Nutrobal:

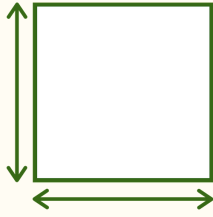
Nutrobal is a multi-vitamin powder, which includes vitamin D3. This is vital to promote calcium absorption.

We dust feeder insects with Nutrobal once a week for youngsters, and once every three weeks for adults.

WATER

Crested Gecko's do not require a water bowl, instead the enclosure should be misted daily to allow the geckos to drink from the leaves as they would in the wild.

ENCLOSURES



Space:

Crested Geckos are arboreal and require a minimum space of 45x45x60cm (WxDxH)

We use the small/tall Exo-Terra enclosure, as this is the perfect sized space.



Lighting:

They need a day and night cycle, and should be given a low-level UVB to provide natural vitamin D.

Our geckos have a 10% UVB Coil Bulb inside the Exo Terra canopy which is filtered by the mesh lid.



Temperature:

They need a hot spot of 28-30°C to allow for thermoregulation. The ambient air should be 24°C.

We use a heat mat on the side of the tank, powered through a thermostat to create a hot spot.



Humidity:

This species need a humidity spike each evening to 90%, with a drop to 50% in the day.

We mist our tanks heavily in the evenings to provide the spike and leave over the day.



Substrate:

Substrate is not a necessity, however soil is best used for females in case of egg-laying.

We use a bioactive soil for our tanks, with drainage, leaf litter and clean-up crew.



Decor:

Because Crested Geckos are arboreal, they require heavy foliage and horizontal branches to allow them to climb and hide up high.

Please see examples page.

MAINTENANCE

Remove poo and urates daily - ensure to check and wipe leaves too

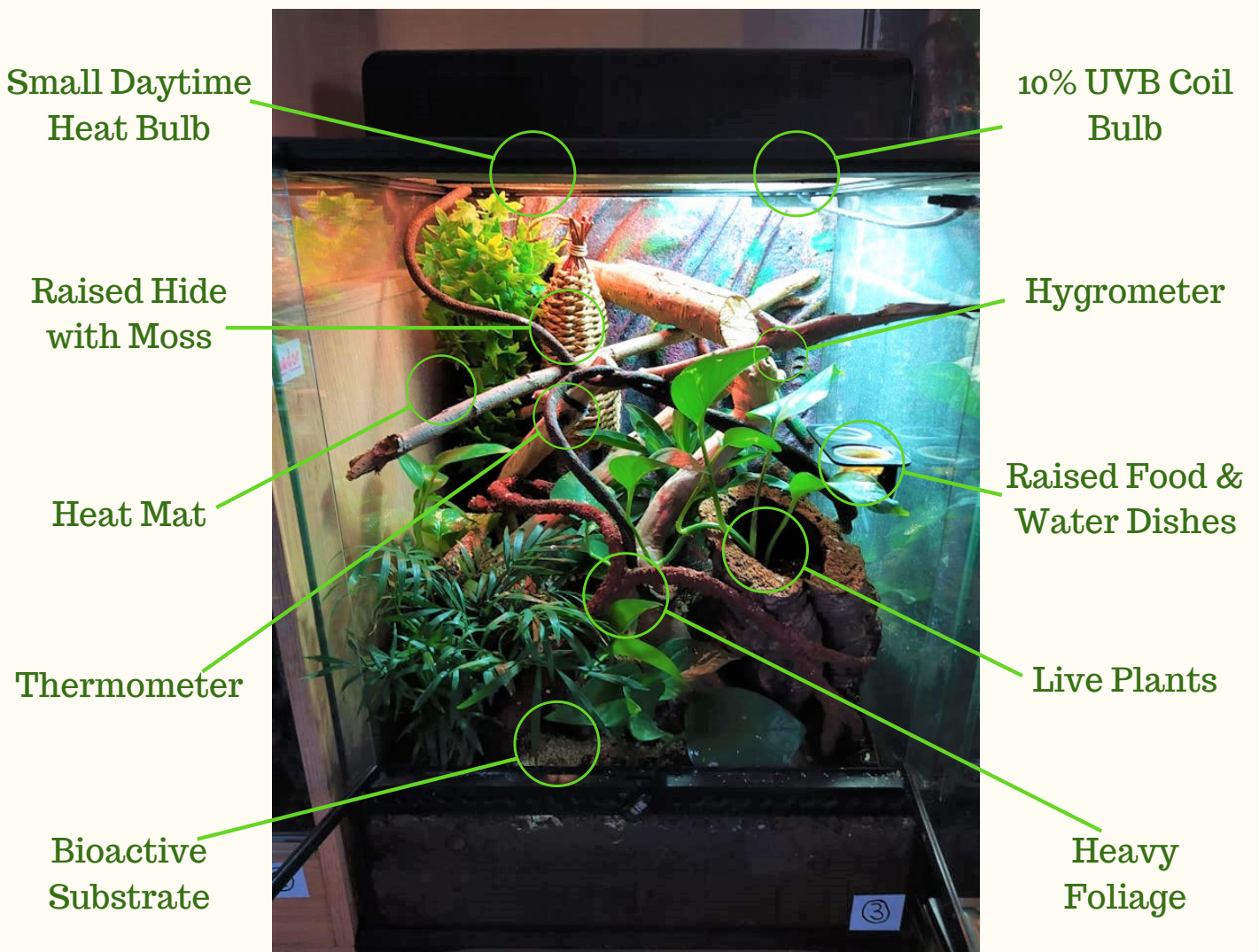
Spray every evening - Mainly foliage so they can drink the droplets

Fully change substrate when needed - this should be done approximately once a month

Clean decor items when soiled - fully disinfect monthly

Variations may apply when using a bio-active set-up

ENCLOSURE EXAMPLE



HOW TO SAVE MONEY

Setting up the tank is often the most expensive part of getting a new exotic. Between the tank, the electrics, the decor and maintenance tools, the cost can be crippling. Here are some of my tips on budgeting...

Take your time

You should never rush into a purchase anyway, so buy what you need piece by piece - this will give you time to research crested geckos while you build your setup.

Don't just buy new

Using tools like Facebook, eBay and other sales sites will save a lot of money!

Use a Bio active substrate

Bioactive substrates will allow you to add clean-up-crew and plants to the setup that can make one lot of substrate last the animals entire life

Get creative

You don't need the flashiest, top of the range decor. Try making hides out of old Tupperware, jars or cardboard boxes. So long as it functions as it needs to and doesn't cause a fire hazard it's fine.

COMMON HEALTH PROBLEMS

The below are a look at some common health problems you may see. It is still, ALWAYS recommended to seek veterinary assistance for anything out of the ordinary.

Dropped Tail



When very stressed or startled, crested geckos will drop their tail as a defence mechanism. This is a natural process, so don't worry, the tail for this species will not grow back and will instead be a "frog butt"

It is recommended to transfer the gecko to paper towel substrate, to keep the wound clean, and avoid leaving biting insects in the enclosure. The wound should heal on its own with no extra attention.



Stuck Shed



During shedding, sometimes skin can get stuck around the toes. It's important to remove this skin, else it will restrict blood flow and eventually cause the ends of their toes to die and fall off.

Once you notice the stuck shed, place the gecko in a shallow tub of luke-warm water (about 2cm deep) to allow the skin to soften. Rub the toes with a cotton bud until the skin is off - don't pull it!



Metabolic Bone Disease



MBD is a condition where the gecko has not had enough calcium and vitamin D3 to promote healthy bone growth. Limbs will appear deformed and the gecko will sometimes struggle to walk.

It is recommended to seek a vets opinion if you start to notice these signs. They may prescribe liquid calcium. If the disease is too severe and interferes with quality of life, euthanasia may be suggested.



Floppy Tail Syndrome



Floppy tail syndrome is a weakness in the muscles at the base of the tail, usually caused when a gecko sleeps upside down often. The tail will bend backwards, and can cause spinal issues if left untreated,

Geckos should be relocated if spotted sleeping upside down, to somewhere horizontal. If the tail is spotted as flopping backwards, seek a veterinary opinion for advice. It may be advised to force a tail-drop.

