



A BETTER LIFE FOR EXOTIC PETS

CRESTED GECKO CARE GUIDE

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

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:

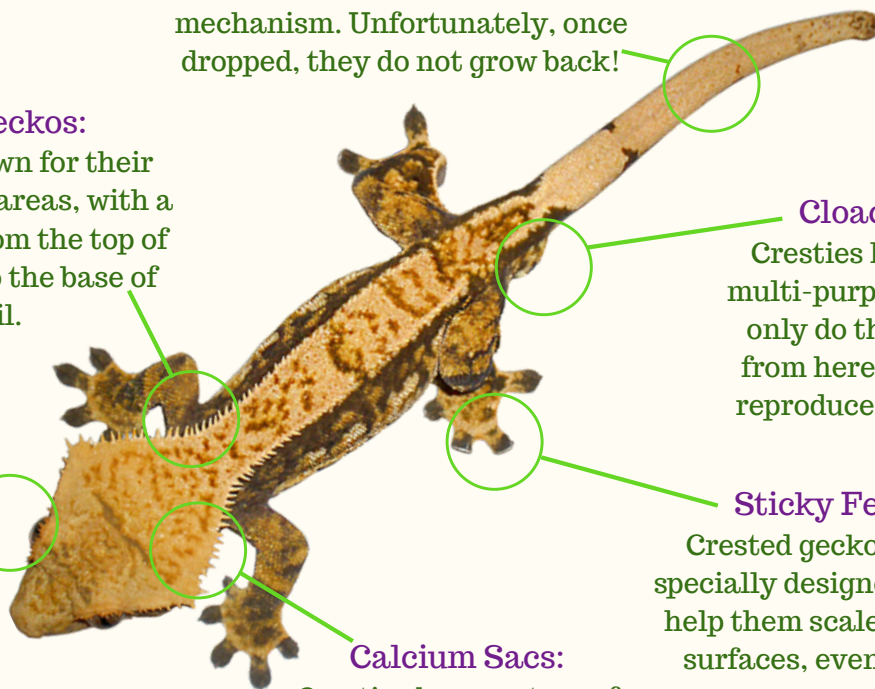
Cresties have a store of calcium within two sacs inside their mouth. This is usually needed for females laying eggs,

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

A small, wall-mounted water bowl should be provided and the enclosure should be misted daily to allow the geckos to drink from the leaves as they would in the wild.

ENCLOSURE EQUIPMENT



Enclosure:

Our go-to enclosure for crested geckos is the Exo Terra 45x45x60cm terrarium. This comes with a fitted canopy that holds two bulbs and a decorative background.



Other brands with a similar build are also fine.

Alternative Heating & UVB:

If a canopy is unavailable, you can use a dome light above the mesh, with a small halogen heat bulb and an Arcadia Shadedweller above the mesh.



Dimming Thermostat:

The canopy option will not require a thermostat. If you choose to use a dome light instead, you will need to use a dimming thermostat with the probe in the basking spot.

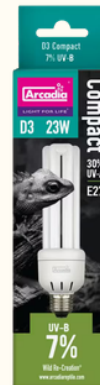
Heat Bulb:

The elongated, 25W basking bulb by Exo Terra suits the canopy perfectly on one side.



UVB:

The 7% Arcadia compact UVB bulbs are ideal for the canopy fixture on one side.



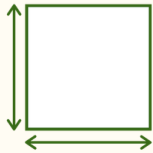
Digital Thermometer x2:

Allows you to check the temperature is correct in basking spot and cool side.



Buying items second hand can be a great way to save money, however you will not get any warranty when doing so, so use caution. For vivariums or décor, ensure the items are thoroughly disinfected before use. We don't recommend second hand items that are made of wood or other porous materials.

ENCLOSURE SET-UP



Space:

The minimum size is the Exo Terra 45x45x60. They prefer more height than anything else.



Lighting:

They will benefit from 5-7% UVB light during the day, with total darkness overnight.



Temperature:

They need a basking spot at 28°C, with an area below 23°C to allow for thermoregulation.



Humidity:

Cresties like a humidity range of 60-80%. This can be maintained by misting daily.

EXAMPLE



Substrate:

Crested geckos are arboreal and therefore spend most of their time off the ground. A moisture retentive substrate will help keep humidity up, such as soil or coco coir. It will also help if you wish to use live plants.



Décor:

You want to create a haven of horizontal and vertical branches and resting places off ground. Using cork tubes, large branches and rope bridges can help achieve this.

The example above is using recommended heating/lighting and uses live plants. Fake plants work just as well and require much less maintenance!

MAINTENANCE

Spot clean daily, removing any faeces/urates.

Fully change substrate when needed - this should be done approximately once every couple of months.

Clean decor items when soiled - fully disinfect monthly.

Change water regularly - fully disinfect the bowl weekly.

Replace the UVB bulb as per manufacturer guidelines.

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.

