

# CAL ZOO'S REFERENCE SHEET

## AFRICAN SKINKS

Latin name	Mabuya sp.	Maximum length	10 inches
Native to	Tanzania	Approximate life span	5 - 10 years

### GENERAL INFORMATION

African Skinks are known under a variety of names: African Skink, African Orange Sided Skink, African Rock Skink, African Striped Skink, African Blue-sided Skink, etc. They are all Mabuya sp. lizards. Care is the same for all, however not all can be housed together compatibly. Keep only those of similar size together. Smaller lizards may not be able to compete successfully for food, or may end up as a meal to a larger lizard if the larger lizard goes after a cricket in the smaller lizards mouth.

### ENCLOSURE

10 gallon aquarium is sufficient. 20 gallons or larger is better.

### SUBSTRATE

Zoo Med REPTI BARK™ or Zoo Med REPTI CAGE CARPET™ are both ideal. Add a few layers of newspaper to the bottom of the aquarium for liquid absorption and easy cleanup.

### TEMPERATURE & HUMIDITY

Daytime temperatures 80 - 85°F. Nighttime temperatures 75 - 80°F. Keep humidity very low. They occur in arid regions.

### HEATING

Use a Zoo Med REPTITHERM® UNDER TANK HEATER (U.T.H.). Do not turn it off, leave it on 24 hours a day. UTH's take a few hours to reach their optimal temperature. For easy heat control, use a Zoo Med REPTI-TEMP™ RHEOSTAT in conjunction with the U.T.H.'s and/or ZOO MED REPTICARE® ROCK HEATERS. Lizards will use a variety of heat sources. Reptiles need to be able to regulate their body temperature, so a temperature gradient must be provided for. A basking area consisting of a Zoo Med REPTI™ BASKING SPOT BULB and a Zoo Med REPTICARE® ROCK HEATER should be provided, as well as an area where your animals can go to cool off. Always use at least one thermometer, two is optimal. One on the cooler side, one on the warmer side.

### LIGHTING

A little UVB lighting is helpful for African Skinks. The Zoo Med REPTISUN™ with its lower UVB and UVA output is an excellent choice for daytime lighting. All reptiles and amphibians need a photo period (light cycle). A plug in timer (for your lights only, do not use a timer for your heating devices) works well to develop a regular photo period of 12 hours light, 12 hours dark. Reptiles and amphibians cannot see the red light spectrum so a low wattage red bulb is ideal for night time viewing of your African Skinks.

### FOOD & WATER

Crickets, waxworms & mealworms. Large, shallow water bowl with easy access. Always feed your crickets assorted fruits and vegetables or a commercially prepared cricket diet 12 - 24 hours before feeding the crickets to your pets. Once a week dust the crickets with Zoo Med REPTIVITE® vitamins just before feeding them to your African Skinks. Don't over-feed or feed a food item too large! Provide a 1 - 2 inch shallow plastic water dish sunk into the substrate that the skinks can easily get in and out of. The water depth should be ½ the height of the skinks Change water at least every other day with fresh de-chlorinated water or spring water. Change more often if the water appears dirty.

### NOTES

Always wash your hands before and immediately after handling reptiles and amphibians. Never leave live food long term with reptiles & amphibians. They can inflict severe harm, even kill your pet. If your animals take some time to eat or you feed them at night, leave a slice of potato, carrot or dry dog food for the live food items to eat. Your local pet shop is an ideal source for reptile and amphibian related books and supplies. Please make sure you read and become familiar with any instructions provided with reptile support products you may purchase. For further information on reptiles and amphibians we recommend you read *REPTILES MAGAZINE* and *THE VIVARIUM*. California Zoological Supply hopes you have enjoyed reading this reference sheet on African Skinks. We hope that our guidelines will assist you with the care or possible purchase of your new pet.

This sheet may be copied in its entirety only.