

CAL ZOO'S REFERENCE SHEET

SOLOMON ISLAND SKINKS

AKA: Prehensile Tailed Skink, Monkey Tail Skink, Corucia

Latin name	Corucia zebrata	Maximum length	32" 28 ounces
Native to	Solomon Islands, South Pacific	Approximate life span	10-13 years

GENERAL INFORMATION

Solomon Island Skinks are the largest known species of skink. Their most notable feature is the large prehensile tail which can be used for grasping branches while climbing through the trees. Also odd for a skink are the strong limbs and well developed claws necessary for climbing. They can be very territorial, so provide plenty of hiding spots in the way of cork bark rounds or hiding boxes. Due to possible aggressive behavior they should be housed separately or in small groups of 1 male with 2 females. Sexing of these animals is difficult, males will tend to have wider heads than females. Females will give live birth to one or sometime two 6-8" baby skinks. The babies are exact duplicates of the adults and are ready to go and fend for themselves. Unfortunately Solomon Skinks are a native food to indigenous people of the South Pacific Region. The meat of the skink has a sweet flavor, probably from the skink's appetite for sweet fruit.

ENCLOSURE

A large, tall terrarium with a screen top, or preferably side ventilation. Provide lots of thick climbing branches for these arboreal lizards. Minimum dimensions for up to a trio of skinks should be 48"L X 24"D X 48"H.

SUBSTRATE

Solomon Island Skinks are almost entirely arboreal, only rarely spending time on the ground, so type of substrate is not critical. Zoo Med REPTI CAGE CARPET™, news paper, and Zoo Med REPTI BARK™ will all work well as substrates. You may want to provide a large dish of damp sphagnum moss because occasionally they will venture down and soak in the moss.

TEMPERATURE & HUMIDITY

Daytime temperatures should fall between 80 - 90-°f. Nighttime temperatures of 65°f are best. Humidity 70 - 80%. The enclosure may be lightly misted once or twice daily to aid shedding with de-chlorinated water.

HEATING

Use a Zoo Med CERAMIC HEATER EMITER™ to heat the air and use in conduction with a Zoo Med RHEOSTAT™ for heat control. Always use a thermometer and humidity gauge in all reptile & amphibian enclosures.

LIGHTING

During daylight hours use a Zoo Med REPTISUN™ UVB FLORESCENT bulb, and for an occasional basking sight, a Zoo Med REPTI™ BASKING SPOT may be used. 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.. Use a red bulb for nighttime viewing of these nocturnal skinks, and to keep nighttime temperatures up.

FOOD & WATER

Solomon Island Skinks are the only known completely herbivorous skink, (eating only fruits and vegetables). Don't forget these are nocturnal lizards, so feed them in the early evening so that their food will be fresh when they begin foraging. Feed every 1 - 2 days. The diet should consist of a variety of fresh fruits, SEPERATE SENTENCE ABOUT POTHOS Pothos plant leaves are a very important food source (these leaves are poisonous to humans if eaten so always handle with caution, and vegetables. Some suggestions are red & green leaf lettuce, spinach, kale, banana, kiwi, melons, grapes and berries. Also offer Zoo Med ZOO MENU® BOX TURTLE FOOD twice a week in a separate shallow dish. 1 - 2 times per week lightly dust food with a vitamin supplement such as Zoo Med REPTIVITE™. Provide a large water bowl that the skinks can climb into and soak in on warm days, or to help with shedding. Change water daily with de-chlorinated water.

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 Solomon Island Skinks. We hope that our guidelines will assist you with the care or possible purchase of your new pet.

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