



Sandfish Skink Care Sheet

Species Name:

Scincus scincus

Adult Size:

20 cm

Lifespan:

5-10 years

Breeding Age:

1-2years



Sandfish skinks (*Scincus scincus*), also known as common sandfish, are remarkable reptiles native to the deserts of North Africa and the Middle East. These skinks are named for their unique ability to "swim" through loose sand, utilising undulating body movements to move efficiently beneath the surface. Their smooth, shiny scales and streamlined bodies reduce friction, facilitating this unique form of locomotion. Adapted to harsh desert environments, sandfish skinks are diurnal, emerging during the cooler parts of the day to hunt. They are primarily insectivorous, preying on insects and other small invertebrates. To escape extreme temperatures and predators, they burrow into the sand, where they also lay their eggs. Sexual maturity is typically reached around 1 to 2 years of age, with breeding occurring in the warmer months. Females lay their eggs in sandy burrows, ensuring a stable incubation environment. These skinks' fascinating behaviours and adaptations make them a subject of interest in herpetology.

Housing:

Enclosure: A wooden 3-4ft vivarium is ideal for the Sandfish Skink. The Maxi sizes provide extra depth for a deep layer of substrate, as keen burrowers your Skink will appreciate this.

Substrate: Use a dry sand/soil mix and provide a deep layer for your skink to burrow into.

Temperature:

Maintain a basking spot temperature of 35-40°C.

Provide a gradient, with the cooler side around 26-30°C.

Use a heat source like a basking light and a heat mat for heating.

Night time temperatures can drop to 21-24°C.

Lighting:

Provide a UVB light source (10-12%) for at least 10-12 hours a day to support calcium metabolism and overall health.

Diet:

Feeding: Offer a varied diet of insects.

Supplements: Dust insects with calcium and vitamin supplements 2-3 times a week.



Humidity and Hydration:

A humidity of 30-40% should be maintained.

Provide a shallow dish for drinking water. Mist the enclosure occasionally to maintain humidity levels and aid in shedding.

Enrichment and Handling:

Place hiding spots, rocks, and branches for climbing to create a stimulating environment.

Provide a secure hide for them to retreat and feel safe.

Handle your Sandfish Skink gently and regularly to foster trust, but be mindful of their stress levels.

Health Considerations:

Regularly monitor for signs of illness, such as lethargy, changes in appetite, or difficulty shedding.

Quarantine new reptiles before introducing them to existing enclosures.

Remember that the care requirements for Sandfish Skinks may vary slightly based on individual needs, so observe your reptile's behaviour and make adjustments accordingly. Always prioritise the well-being and health of your pet by providing a well-maintained and enriched environment.