



## Crested Gecko

### Diet and Care Recommendations

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

Crested geckos (*Rhacodactylus ciliatus*) are native to New Caledonia. They are nocturnal and spend most of their time in the canopy of the rainforests. Cresteds can live for 10-15 years. To determine the sex of this species, usually the male has a much larger tail base where the hemipenes are located.

Adult size: 5-8 inches

Temperature range: 70-82 °F

#### DIET

Cresteds are omnivores and eat insects as well as fruit and nectar.

**Invertebrates:** Offer a 2 crickets 3 times a week after they have been gut loaded with T-Rex Calcium Plus or ILF. You could also offer small cockroaches, phoenix worms or silk worms. You can purchase them from [www.mulberryfarms.com](http://www.mulberryfarms.com)

**Fruit:** Crested geckos to like bananas, peaches, nectarines, apricots, passion fruit, pears, mangoes and papaya. These can be puréed and then served to your gecko in a small dish a couple times a week.

**Crested Gecko Diet:** T-Rex makes a crested gecko diet that can be mixed with water and served to your crested in a small dish 2-4 times a week.

#### ENVIRONMENT

Crested geckos should be kept in a cage that provides them with plenty of space to move around, climb, and hide.

**Lighting:** Crested geckos require a specific wavelength of light called UVB. It is required for the proper absorption of calcium. We recommend using a full-spectrum bulb, **the Reptisun 5.0 or 10.0, manufactured by ZooMed**. Leave UVB bulbs on for 14 hours a day, and make sure that the bulb is not filtered through glass or plastic. These bulbs need to be changed every 6 months because their effectiveness as a UVB ray emitter decreases over time.

**Heat:** Use ceramic heat emitter bulbs. The temperature gradient should be 75-82°F on the hot end and 70-75°F on the cool end. Keep a thermometer at basking level on the hot end of the enclosure, and at ground level on the cool end. Provide branches for climbing as well. Never use heat rocks or heating pads, as they can cause severe burns.

**Substrate:** Use paper-based bedding, such as Carefresh or Yesterday's News. Coconut fiber is also okay. Avoid all types of sand, including calcisand. Paper towels or bath towels are also appropriate for the bedding.

**Moisture:** Crested geckos live in rainforests, so misting is required. Their humidity should be above 60 %. Use a spray bottle and mist 1-2 times a day or install a commercial reptile mister. Provide a large dish of water for soaking and defecating. Change the water daily.

**Enclosure:** Geckos like to climb and hide. Provide multiple hiding places and several branches and foliage.

### **MEDICAL CARE**

**Exams:** A yearly exam is recommended. Additionally, fecal tests for intestinal parasites are suggested.