

Anole

“Anolis carolinensis”

The Anole lizard is incredible in its ability to camouflage itself in its environment. Thus an owner can decorate the cage in mainly green colors to keep them the beautiful emerald color they can become. As they only get to be about six inches in length, they are the perfect pets for anyone who does not have a lot of space. Plus watching these very swift reptiles capture prey, especially winged ones, can be really amazing to watch.

General Diet:

Anoles eat mainly insects such as small crickets and various worms.

Vitamins/Supplements:

Reptiles need to have a vitamin/mineral supplement with calcium and phosphorous. This supplement should be sprinkled on the adult's food items at every second to third feeding and more often with young reptiles. We can explain how often to feed and give supplements to your new pet.

Treats/ Extra Foods:

Anoles will eat almost anything that moves and fits into their mouths. In warmer weather, it is good to supplement store bought insect diet with outdoor insects, especially anything soft bodied like moths. Anoles are excellent at catching flying insects! Take insects only from areas where no pesticides have been used.

Housing:

Anoles stay small, so 3 to 4 can be housed together in a ten-gallon tank, as long as only one of the anoles is a male. A 29- gallon would be better with only one large body male as these small animals cover a large area in their search for prey. A screen can be used on top along with two types of lighting systems. One type of lighting has a reptile fluorescent bulb that gives off full spectrum light including UVA and UVB. The UVB is especially important for these reptiles to get so they can absorb calcium properly.

The second light system is for heat. Reptiles are ectotherms, which means they get their heat from an outside source. Different areas of the habitat should be at different temperatures, so reptiles can move around to heat up or cool off. Anoles are comfortable with a daytime temperature in their tank of 74-84 degrees and a nighttime temperature of 66-72. Use a daylight heat bulb in a heat lamp during the day to keep the temperature up in their tank. Most stores do not recommend using hot rocks. For one, it is not natural for an anole to move to the forest floor to obtain heat. Also due to the construction of hot rocks, they can cause overheating of the pet. If the place you live gets cold at night, use a low wattage night heat bulb (which gives off heat but not much light) in a heat lamp, or an under-tank-heating pad made especially for reptiles. (Do not use ones made for humans.)

If you use a reptile-heating pad, remember to turn it off during the day.

Anoles like some humidity in their tank and should be misted at least once a day. Keep a large shallow dish of water in the tank as well. Live plants will help keep humidity up and will give something for the anoles to climb on. Some branches or other decorations that they can also climb would be good. Do not use branches from outside or you might be introducing pesticides or diseases. Use the appropriate reptile litter or substrate on the bottom.

Sanitation/ General Care:

Change the water every day and clean out the water dish thoroughly twice a week. The litter or substrate used on the bottom should be cleaned as often as needed, and this will depend on tank size, the reptile's size, and the number of reptiles in the tank.

General Maintenance:

Mist the tank thoroughly once daily and more often if the air is especially dry. Reptiles will shed their skin periodically. Mist them lightly at these times to help them shed the skin more easily. Be sure the tank is at the right temperature at all times, as a chilled reptile will not eat well or at all and may get sick. Change the reptile full spectrum light as often as recommended by the manufacturer, usually every six months to a year. Although the bulb may still be working, it will lose its potency over a certain period of time.

Health Care:

Anoles are generally very hardy when kept in the right conditions. They do not require any yearly check ups or vaccines.

Special Section - Handling Precaution:

Reptiles can carry one disease that can be transmitted to people called salmonellosis. Although it is rare for a reptile to carry this disease, it is always important to wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after you have handled your pet or anything in your pet's cage. Keep your pet out of the kitchen area and do not allow very small children to handle any reptiles.

Supplies checklist:

Fluorescent light with reptile UVB bulb
Heat lamp with daylight heat bulb
2nd heat lamp with night heat bulb (as needed)
Hot rock or under-tank heating pads (as needed)
Branches or other decorations for climbing
Reptile litter or other substrate

Fish tank
Screen top
Water dish
Books about Anoles
Vitamin/mineral supplement

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