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## KEEPING BLUE TONGUES AND STUMPY TAILS

As the care of Blue tongues and stumpy tails are very similar, we shall deal with both animals in this one care sheet.

Your new stumpy or blue tongue is quite an easy animal to look after and be kept indoors or out, but however they do have a few requirements that must be fulfilled if your new lizard is to enjoy a full and healthy life.

**FOOD:** Feeding these animals is achieved by using chopped or grated vegetables and fruits like carrot, apple, celery, red capsicum, rock melon, mixed lettuces (not iceberg) and banana.

Please ensure that the harder vegetables such as carrot are well grated so that they can not cause intestinal blockages. This vegetable mix should be supplemented with a bit of meat as well, and we use "Pedigree Puppy" canned food for this purpose. Some other favourites of your new lizard are dandelion flowers and they will really appreciate these. Garden snails will also be gratefully taken. Store any snails you collect with some lettuce for 24 hours before use, to ensure that they have not been baited & don't use any that die during this period.

**HEAT:** Your new lizard is a cold blooded creature that cannot directly control it's own body temperature. This means that your new lizard needs to be able to move from a hot area to a cooler area and vice versa to regulate it's body temperature. To give your lizard a chance to do this, it is best to use light bulbs or another heat source to generate a hot spot at one end of the enclosure, control of this heat source should be taken care of with a thermostat. Other methods of generating heat are available, and if you need help on this subject then talk to us further. Glass fish tanks do not generally make good reptile enclosures, a timber enclosure is far better. For more information on this subject see the reptile enclosure caresheet.

**Ultra Violet Light:** Reptiles, like us, need to have exposure to U.V. light to enable us to process vitamin D in their bodies. Without a good source of U.V. your animal will suffer from problems with it's skeleton and joints. Deformities are not uncommon in animals that are housed with an insufficient or no U.V.source, and this can result in paralysis and even death. A good flouro tube like a Repti-glo or Repti-sun is essential if your animal does not get regular exposure to natural sunlight. This exposure needs to be direct, not through glass. Glass cuts down the penetration of U.V. light almost totally.

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**Calcium:** You should regularly supplement your animal's food with a good calcium powder like Repti Cal. A small amount sprinkled over your animals food will suffice twice a week.

Look after your lizard properly and you will have a healthy and happy animal for many years to come. We know of a blue tongues that have lived over 35 years.