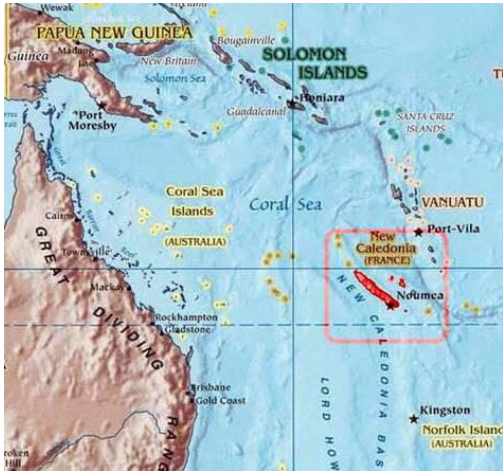




Jungle Bob's Care Sheet Crested Geckos (*Rhacodactylus/Correlophus ciliatus*)



General Information

The Crested Gecko (or “Crestie”/Eyelash Gecko) has skyrocketed in popularity since its relatively recent introduction into the pet trade (until the mid-1990’s, it was presumed extinct!). Extremely hardy, mild-mannered, and able to thrive on a simple diet, it is a great choice for novice and experienced keepers alike.

Nocturnal and arboreal, Crested Geckos are limited to the New Caledonian islands of Grand Terre and Isle of Pines, where they are found only in small areas of mountainous rainforest.

A raised crest runs along each side of the back, above the eyes, and on the limbs. The head is triangular in shape and the tail is prehensile. Crested Geckos mature at 6-8 inches in length, and are red, gray, yellow, brown or green in color. They may have stripes, color-tipped crests, or no pattern at all. Several unique color morphs have been produced by breeders.

Breeding Crested Geckos is fairly easy and they can be housed in small groups. Male geckos are aggressive towards other males and it is best to keep one male with several females. To sex your adult gecko examine the base of the tail, males will have a noticeable bulge. Crested geckos are usually sexually mature before they are one year old. Healthy female geckos will produce 1-2 eggs every month and can produce up to eighteen eggs in a year. When properly incubated crested gecko eggs hatch within 85 days.

Housing

A pair of Crested Geckos can be kept in a 20 gallon high style or other vertically-oriented terrarium stocked with branches, plants, cork bark, and vines. The substrate may be [coconut husk](#), [cypress mulch](#), or [pine bark](#).

Crested Geckos obtain Vitamin D3 from their diet, and so do not need a UVB light source. However, a low level [UVB bulb](#) may be used as “insurance” against a Vitamin D3 deficiency. They fare best at a temperature gradient of 78-82 F, with a dip to 68-72 F at night (if possible). Humidity should be kept at 50-75%. Males cannot be housed together. Females usually get along well, but groups must be monitored carefully.

Diet

Commercial Crested Gecko Food has been successfully used as 100% of the diet. Pets can also be offered variety in the form of crickets, roaches, silkworms, calci-worms and other commercially-available species. Insects should themselves be provided with a nutritious diet for 1-3 days before being offered to your pets. Mealworms, implicated in intestinal blockages, should be avoided or used only when recently-molted (white in color). A spray bottle should be used to mist the terrarium twice daily, as geckos prefer lapping water drops to using a water bowl.

Your pets also need a calcium and vitamin supplement. A Calcium/VitaminD3 supplement should be used on all meals offered to babies and reduced to 2-3 times weekly for adults. A vitamin/mineral powder should be employed 2-3 times weekly.

Cleaning and Handling

The terrarium should be cleaned as necessary, with fecal matter and left -over food being removed daily and the substrate being changed once each month. The inside of the terrarium can be cleaned with an appropriate reptile cage cleaner; we recommend [Natural Chemistry's Healthy Habitat](#).

Crested Geckos can be somewhat high-strung, and are likely to leap from the hand if frightened. The tail will snap off if grabbed and, oddly for a gecko, will not re-grow. Care must be taken to avoid unexpected leaps and falls. Always wash your hands before and after handling any animal.

Fun Fact

Prior to the mid 1990's, it was nearly impossible to find a photo of a Crested Gecko, and they were presumed extinct. Today millions are bred annually by pet owners, but the tiny wild population is threatened by habitat loss and introduced predators such as rats and fire ants.

Jungle Bob's Reptile World
984 Middle Country Rd. - Selden, NY 11784

www.JungleBobsReptileWorld.com

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