Recommended Annual Husbandry Schedule

Gallotia galloti galloti - Southern Tenerife lizard

Identity and range

Nominate Gallotia galloti from the centre and south of Tenerife. Bischoff restricted the type locality to the Guimar valley. This form occupies sunny rocky habitats, xeric scrub, agricultural margins, walls and open mountain habitats and is generally adapted to a drier climate than northern G. g. eisentrauti.

Climate and annual cycle

South Tenerife is mild in winter and warm, very dry in summer. Tenerife Sur Airport normals rise from 18.4 C mean temperature in January to 24.7 C in August. Rainfall averages 17-30 mm/month in winter but only 0-1 mm/month from May through August.

Diet and reproduction

An omnivorous Gallotia with strong seasonal use of fruit, flowers, leaves and other plant material plus insects and other invertebrates. Species-level field accounts place breeding from spring into summer, with eggs laid in soil and young appearing in late summer/early autumn.

MONTH	DAY AMBIENT	NIGHT	BASKING	UVI*	PHOTO	RH DAY / NIGHT*	SPRAY / RAIN	FOOD*	STATUS / BREEDING
January	18-22 C	13-16 C	31-34 C	2-3	10 h 35 m	50-65 / 60-75%	Light mist 1-2x/wk	2-3	Mild winter rest
February	18-22 C	13-16 C	32-35 C	2-3	11 h	50-65 / 60-75%	Light mist 1-2x/wk	2-3	Conditioning
March	20-24 C	14-17 C	35-38 C	3-4	11 h 45 m	45-60 / 55-70%	Light mist 1x/wk	3-4	Warm-up / courtship
April	22-26 C	15-18 C	38-41 C	4	12 h 40 m	45-60 / 55-70%	Minimal / occasional	4	Courtship / mating
May	23-27 C	17-19 C	40-42 C	4-5	13 h 25 m	45-60 / 55-70%	Minimal; moist nest	4-5	Mating / first laying possible
June	25-29 C	18-21 C	41-43 C	4-5	13 h 55 m	45-60 / 55-70%	Minimal; water always	4-5	Main laying / incubation
July	27-31 C	20-22 C	42-44 C	5	13 h 45 m	45-60 / 55-70%	Minimal; water always	4-5	Laying / incubation
August	27-31 C	20-23 C	42-44 C	5	13 h 10 m	45-60 / 55-70%	Minimal; water always	4	Late laying / hatching
September	26-30 C	20-23 C	41-43 C	4-5	12 h 20 m	45-60 / 55-70%	Light mist 1x/wk	4	Hatching / recovery
October	24-28 C	18-21 C	38-41 C	4	11 h 25 m	50-65 / 60-75%	Light mist 1x/wk	3-4	Autumn taper
November	21-25 C	16-19 C	34-37 C	3	10 h 45 m	50-65 / 60-75%	Light mist 1-2x/wk	3	Cooling / reduced feeding
December	19-23 C	14-17 C	31-34 C	2-3	10 h 25 m	50-65 / 60-75%	Light mist 1-2x/wk	2-3	Mild winter rest

Calendar: Tenerife and the Netherlands are both in the Northern Hemisphere, so the native month sequence is retained. Winter is a mild seasonal slowdown, not deep brumation.

* RH, UVI and spray values are captive working targets. Southern Tenerife receives almost no summer rainfall, but coastal air humidity remains moderate; keep the surface dry while preserving drinking water and a slightly humid refuge.

Nominate-form distinction: compared with G. g. eisentrauti, this schedule is warmer and drier, especially from May through September.

Practical Husbandry and Daily Management

Southern Tenerife husbandry: strong basking, intense UVB, dry summer surfaces, deep retreats and a plant-rich omnivorous diet.

Enclosure and structure

For one adult, about 140 x 70 x 70 cm or larger is a practical starting point; breeding pairs benefit from 160 x 80 x 80 cm or more. Provide secure rock slabs, broad basking ledges, low branches, cork/rock crevices and deep soil for self-dug retreats. Anchor heavy structures to the base.

Heat, gradient and UVB

Use a strong local basking surface with a broad escape gradient. Summer basking around 41-44 C is appropriate, while shaded retreats should remain much cooler. Winter basking can fall to about 31-34 C. A measured active-season UVI around 4-5 is a practical target, reducing to 2-3 in winter.

Humidity and rainfall

Keep exposed substrate largely dry from May through September, reflecting the almost rainless southern Tenerife summer. Do not desiccate the animals: maintain constant drinking water and one slightly humid deep refuge. Increase localized misting modestly in autumn and winter.

Nest provision

Provide 25-35 cm or more of loose soil/sand by April, with a lightly moist lower layer that holds a tunnel. Keep this nesting zone available through August. A female should be able to dig away from the hottest basking area and select her own moisture/temperature depth.

Adult diet

Use a varied plant-rich omnivorous diet: edible weeds, leafy greens, flowers, browse and controlled fruit, supplemented with insects, snails and other invertebrates. Avoid turning the adult diet into a high-protein insect diet; wild Gallotia exploit large amounts of plant and fruit material.

Juvenile diet

Juveniles should receive a higher invertebrate proportion than adults. Offer small gut-loaded crickets, roaches and other prey frequently while presenting greens, flowers and fruit from the beginning. Increase plant matter progressively with growth.

Social management

Adult males can be strongly territorial and courtship may include forceful neck-biting. Use multiple basking, feeding and refuge sites. Breeding pairs can be maintained in large structured enclosures, but separate immediately for sustained pursuit, injury or food/heat exclusion.

Daily keeper checks

Check activity, gait, toes/claws, eyes/nose, mouth, tail, feces, hydration and body mass. During summer verify that deep hides remain cooler than the basking area. During breeding monitor female body condition, abdominal contour, digging behaviour and calcium intake.

Breeding, Eggs and Evidence Notes

Nominate-form reproductive data are less complete than for eisentrauti, so direct evidence and closely related Gallotia data are separated clearly.

Breeding timing

Species-level accounts place the reproductive season from roughly April through August. In southern Tenerife, warming and lengthening days in March-April provide the natural build-up. Courtship should peak in April-May, with laying expected mainly from May through August.

Clutch size

Life-history datasets for G. g. galloti indicate a mean clutch size of about three eggs, while broader species accounts commonly report clutches of roughly 3-6 eggs. Larger females can produce more eggs. Repeat clutches are possible in Gallotia, but exact nominate-form frequency is less well quantified.

Incubation

Direct nominate-form incubation datasets are limited. Related Tenerife G. g. eisentrauti breeds successfully at about 26 C with hatching around 62-89 days; species-level accounts also place hatchlings in late summer/early autumn. A conservative starting point is therefore about 25.5-27 C with moderate substrate moisture.

Winter conditioning

Provide a mild winter reduction in heat, daylight and feeding from roughly December-February. This reflects the southern Tenerife cool season without imposing deep brumation. Keep animals able to bask and drink throughout the winter phase.

Evidence confidence

Nominate distribution - High
Centre and south of Tenerife; type locality restricted to Guimar.

South Tenerife climate - High
AEMET Tenerife Sur 1981-2010 normals.

Plant-rich omnivory - High-moderate
Tenerife Gallotia diet literature and xeric-habitat fruit studies.

Spring-summer breeding - Moderate-high
Species-level Gallotia galloti accounts and related captive work.

Mean clutch ~3 - Moderate-high
Life-history dataset reports 2.95 mean clutch size for G. g. galloti.

3-6 egg working range - Moderate
Broader species accounts; individual size affects clutch size.

Incubation 25.5-27 C - Moderate
Conservative extrapolation from closely related eisentrauti and species timing.

RH / UVI targets - Moderate
Captive working translation of southern Tenerife ecology.

Key references

1. Bischoff (1982): nominate G. g. galloti in central and southern Tenerife; type locality Guimar. 2. AEMET Tenerife Sur Aeropuerto 1981-2010 climate normals. 3. Molina-Borja & Rodriguez-Dominguez life-history synthesis: G. g. galloti mean clutch size about 2.95. 4. Tenerife Gallotia diet/frugivory literature: strong use of plant and fruit material. 5. G. galloti species-level reproduction and closely related G. g. eisentrauti incubation data used cautiously where nominate-specific evidence is sparse.

UVI beneath the optional T5 tube

Gallotia galloti galloti

Your measuring point

Measure UVI at normal back height directly beneath the brightest accessible part of the optional T5 strip. Place the strip toward the middle/back with free access to and away from it; preserve a gradient into fully covered refuges near UVI 0. These numbers describe the exposure area, not the whole enclosure or a daily average.

Measure and adjust

1. Use a UV Index meter. A Solarmeter 6.5/6.5R or equivalent UVI meter is suitable. Broadband UVB readings in microwatts/cm2 cannot be substituted for UVI.

2. Measure the installed arrangement. Warm the tube for about 30 minutes. Keep the reflector, guards and mesh in their normal positions. With the animal elsewhere, hold the sensor at its normal back height, aimed toward the tube.

3. Adjust the fixture. Begin near the lower part of a newly selected working range and adjust gradually. Respect the lamp manufacturer's minimum distance. Recheck after each change and check every higher accessible branch, rock or platform.

4. Keep a full gradient. Provide usable exposure across the animal's body, lower-UVI areas and fully covered refuges near UVI 0. For daytime baskers, overlap the UV area with visible light and appropriate basking warmth while retaining cooler shade.

5. Record and recheck. Log UVI, measuring point, tube-to-back distance, tube age and lamp-on time. Recheck through the year and after changes to the tube, reflector, mesh or furnishings. Exposure duration and behaviour also determine dose.

A T5 range is a working exposure target, not a whole-cage setting, measured wild monthly average, guaranteed optimum or proven safety ceiling. The animal must be able to enter and leave freely.

Monthly target at normal back height

Month	UVI under T5 when on
January	2-3
February	2-3
March	3-4
April	4
May	4-5
June	4-5
July	5
August	5
September	4-5
October	4
November	3
December	2-3

Retain numbers; clarify measurement
The retained range remains a provisional captive working target. No new species-specific result was found that clearly requires a numerical change. Retaining it is not certification of an experimentally established optimum.

Evidence level: Provisional retention. The seasonal schedule is a captive operating plan; it is not measured wild monthly UV. Off means the existing planned UVB-off/rest phase is preserved. Any staged Off/1 entry still means gradual reintroduction.

UV references: Baines et al. (2016), UV-Tool; Muryn, Baines and Dishman (2026), Reptile Lighting Guide V10. Full rationale and monthly comparison: UVI_Audit_Report.html.