

Fire skink

Togo skink, true fire skink

Riopa fernandi

Adult Size	10 " – 14"	Life Span	5 to 20 years
Male/Female Differences	Males tend to be longer and more heavily bodied than females.		
Compatibility	Adult male skinks are very territorial so keep singly. Groups of females or females with one male can live together.		
Origin	West Africa		
Climate	Moist, warm areas.		
Day Cycle	Diurnal – active during the day.		
Temperature	Divide the cage into a warm and cool zone. The daytime temperatures should be 85 – 90 degrees in the basking spot and about 75 in the cool end. Nighttime temps should be between 72 and 78. Use a heat pad and/or a heat lamp.		
Lighting	High quality UVB lighting to mimic daylight for 12 hours a day.		
Humidity	Use moss to increase humidity. Mist daily to keep the humidity fairly high.		
Habitat/Territory	Moist forested areas where they burrow into the soil.		
Substrate/Bedding	Sand, coconut fiber, aspen, small gravel, or vermiculite all make a good substrate to burrow into. Cage carpet with moss will keep the cage more sanitary and prevent mites. Use a humidity box – a cave or shelter lined with moist moss – to keep up the humidity.		
Hiding Place/Den	Fire skinks need a hiding place. Plastic reptile huts or wooden logs make ideal hiding places.		

Cage Type	Aquariums or critter cages make ideal homes as they are easy to clean. Younger skinks need a foot of cage each, especially when kept in groups. Larger skinks need more space. The cage should be large enough to offer separate hot, basking areas, equipped with a log or stone to climb on to bask, and a cool zone for thermal regulation.
Diet	Fire skinks are primarily carnivores, so include crickets, earthworms, mealworms, scrambled eggs and cooked meats. Offer flowers, greens, fruits such as bananas, and baby foods. Skinks will also eat small lizards and skinks. Pinkies are great treats for older skinks and are a great source of calcium.
Supplements	Dust crickets and other foods with a calcium/vitamin powder just before feeding. Ensure proper nutrition by gut loading crickets with healthy foods.
Diet Precautions	Avoid feeding only proteins to your skink. Ensure a mixed diet to prevent metabolic bone disorders.
Feeding	Offer 4-5 calcium-dusted crickets per day. Offer other foods in a small bowl and remove daily to prevent spoilage.
Water Source	Provide a water dish large enough for them to soak in. They get the bulk of their moisture from their food.
Grooming	Fire skinks need access to water to properly shed their skins. Their skin should be smooth and shiny. Other grooming is not necessary.
Oral and Foot Care	A clean water source and clean cage are necessary to prevent mouth rot. High humidity is also necessary to ensure a proper shed, including the skin between the toes. If the fire skink does not get enough climbing, their nails might need to be trimmed.
Proper Handling	Never grab a skink by the tail. It will break off as a survival mechanism. Their tail will grow back, but will be smaller. Fire skink held from a young age are quite tame; support them at both sets of legs.
Habitat Maintenance	Spot clean dirty areas. Scoops are great ways to sift the substrate. Weekly wipe down cage, replacing substrate to prevent mold and mildew from growing.
Health Concerns	Most health concerns come from improper diet, incorrect

lighting, and lack of humidity. Feeding balanced meals with proper calcium supplements can prevent any metabolic diseases. Fire skinks are prone to ticks and mites and bacterial infections from unsanitary conditions.
