**Cruisin’ with the Cresties:**

**Crested Geckos:** Cresties are small soft bodied geckos that come from Australia and Fiji. They are pretty easy to care for and make great beginner pets. With proper care crested geckos can live 15 to 20 years.

**Habitat:** Baby crested geckos are best housed in a plastic critter keeper. An adult crested gecko should be housed in a tall tank. 18X24 front opening enclosures work really well for single geckos. They need the height for climbing. Of course, taller is better. They should have screen tops for ventilation.

**Furnishings:** Crested Geckos require a lot of places to hide and things to climb on. Filling the enclosure with a mix of branches, plants and vines at various heights is best for cresties. They are private critters who can become stressed and unhealthy if they are not offered many places to hide. They need plants around the top of the enclosure as they normally stay in trees in the wild.

**Lighting:**If you have live plants in your vivarium regular light can be provided by a fluorescent bulb running the length of the tank. Crested geckos tend to rest in foliage during the day and are active at night. They do not require UVB light.

**Heat:** Crested geckos like temperatures of 72 to 80 degrees during the day. It can drop to 65-75 at night. The easiest way to provide heat is a low-wattage incandescent bulb or a ceramic heat emitter (produces heat without light) placed on the screen top over one side of the habitat. You must always keep one part of the habitat warm and also a cooler area to regulate their body temperature.

**Substrate**: Crested geckos spend most of their time above ground so a variety of substrates can be used. For simple maintenance purposes, paper towels are easy to clean. A substrate that holds moisture can assist with maintaining humidity levels. Coconut fiber is great for this.

**Food:** A commercial crested gecko food provides a well-balanced nutritious diet. Crested geckos thrive when fed this diet exclusively. The diet is mixed with two parts water and offered in shallow dishes three times a week as much as these geckos will eat at a feeding. Some Cresties will eat insects too. They can be offered a variety of insects, (roaches, soldier fly larvae, crickets, mealworms, wax worms, and super worms). When selecting the size of an insect, you should choose one that is slightly smaller than the space between the gecko's eyes. You can offer insects once to twice a week alongside the complete crested gecko diet.

**Water:** Water should always be available for crested geckos in a shallow water dish. They prefer to drink from dripping water, so spraying the enclosure with a spray bottle is recommended once or twice a day.

**Tails:** In nature, crested geckos will usually lose their tails and end up with a tiny pointed tail nub. In captivity the same can happen if they get their tail caught or if you grab them by the tail, so be careful. It won’t kill them but it does hurt, and sets them up for risk of bacterial infections.

**Cohabitation:** Geckos do best when housed individually. Two geckos are likely to fight. Males will be especially aggressive towards each other, often injuring or killing other males. Some people have success keeping geckos in groups in very large enclosures. If the space is big enough and there are plenty of food dishes and hiding places than it might be possible to house several without problems, but we do not recommend risking it.

If you have any questions or concerns that are not addressed here, please feel free to contact Creepy Critters Rescue at any time.