



## CHINESE WATER DRAGON

*Physignathus cocincinus*

**ORIGIN:** Chinese water dragons are native to Southeast Asia, including China, Thailand, and Vietnam. They are arboreal and semi-aquatic, typically inhabiting dense tropical forests.

**SIZE:** Chinese water dragons reach an average adult size of 2.5 feet. Males are typically larger and more heavy-bodied than females.

**CAGING:** Chinese water dragons may be successfully kept in a variety of enclosures which retain humidity. Juveniles can live in a 20-gallon aquarium, but a pair of adults will require at least a 55-gallon aquarium.

**SUBSTRATE:** Chinese water dragons can be kept on a variety of substrates including soil, mulch, peat moss, bark, cage carpet, and newspaper. The substrate should retain humidity and be easily cleaned.

**TEMPERATURE:** Chinese water dragons should be provided with a thermal gradient ranging from 80°F at one end of the cage to 95°F at the other. This is easily achieved by placing a heat light at one end of the enclosure.

**LIGHT:** Chinese water dragons require full-spectrum lighting to properly synthesize calcium and other vitamins. This can be provided with a variety of commercial light bulbs made for reptiles. A basking area must be provided with a heat lamp. Lights should be left on only during the day.

**WATER:** Chinese water dragons should be provided with fresh, clean water at all times. Use a water dish which allows the lizard to submerge its entire body. In addition, the cage should be misted at least once daily to maintain humidity levels at above 60%.

**DIET:** Chinese water dragons feed on a variety of commercially available feeder insects including mealworms, crickets, and wax worms. Prior to feeding, insects should be dusted with a vitamin and mineral supplement powder for reptiles. Fruits and vegetables can be offered, but many Chinese water dragons will not eat them.

### **RECOMMENDED SUPPLIES**

- Enclosure as detailed above
- Heat lamp
- UV emitting light
- Thermometer with probe to monitor temperature at both ends of enclosure
- Substrate as detailed above
- Literature about water dragon husbandry
- Water dish
- Vitamin and mineral supplement
- Branches and vines for climbing
- Spray bottle

### **OPTIONAL ACCESSORIES**

- Night light for nighttime viewing
- Silk plants and branches
- Decorative cage background

### **SMALL ANIMAL & REPTILE REPLACEMENT GUARANTEE**

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**NOTE:** The information contained in this caresheet solely represents the opinions of the author. It is not intended as a complete guide to captive husbandry.