

Recommended Annual Husbandry Schedule

Timon kurdistanicus - Kurdistan ocellated lizard

Identity and range

A large eastern *Timon* from the Zagros region, now treated as a full species. Native mainly to southeastern Türkiye, northern Iraq and western/northwestern Iran. The type locality near Byara/Byare in Kurdistan is about 1,130 m; regional records extend through upland oak country.

Climate and annual cycle

A strongly seasonal continental cycle: cold, wet winters with frost or snow, then a warm to very hot and very dry summer. Historical field/terrarium work recorded marked autumn inactivity and considered about 3-5 months of winter sleep natural in the native range.

Diet and reproduction

Predominantly arthropod-eating. Early captive observations recorded crickets, grasshoppers and snails; soft fruit was accepted but should remain optional. Oviparous. Direct reproductive data are sparse, so spring courtship and early-summer laying are used here as conservative working windows.

MONTH	DAY AMBIENT	NIGHT	BASKING	UVI*	PHOTO	RH DAY / NIGHT*	SPRAY / RAIN	FOOD*	STATUS / BREEDING
January	7-10 C	5-8 C	Off	Off	9 h 45 m	55-65 / 70-80%	Local moisture only	None	Brumation
February	7-10 C	5-8 C	Off	Off	10 h 30 m	55-65 / 70-80%	Local moisture only	None	Brumation; wake late
March	18-22 C	10-14 C	34-37 C	2-3	11 h 40 m	50-60 / 65-75%	Light mist 2x/wk	2-3	Warm-up / conditioning
April	21-25 C	12-16 C	37-40 C	3-4	12 h 50 m	45-60 / 60-75%	Light mist 1-2x/wk	3-4	Courtship
May	23-27 C	14-18 C	39-42 C	3-4	13 h 45 m	40-55 / 55-70%	Light mist; moist nest	4-5	Mating / follicles
June	25-29 C	16-20 C	40-43 C	4	14 h 20 m	35-50 / 50-65%	Mostly dry; moist nest	4-5	Main laying window
July	27-31 C	18-22 C	40-44 C	4	14 h 10 m	35-50 / 50-65%	Dry surface; moist retreat	4-5	Incubation / recovery
August	27-31 C	18-22 C	40-43 C	4	13 h 25 m	35-50 / 50-65%	Dry surface; moist retreat	4	Summer activity
September	24-28 C	16-19 C	38-41 C	3-4	12 h 20 m	40-55 / 55-70%	Light mist 1x/wk	3-4	Recovery
October	20-24 C	12-15 C	35-38 C	2-3	11 h 10 m	45-60 / 60-75%	Light mist 1-2x/wk	2-3	Autumn taper
November	14-18 C	8-11 C	30-34 C limited	1-2	10 h 15 m	50-65 / 65-80%	Local moisture	1-2 then stop	Gut-clearance / cooling
December	7-10 C	5-8 C	Off	Off	9 h 40 m	55-65 / 70-80%	Local moisture only	None	Brumation

Calendar: native range and the Netherlands are both in the Northern Hemisphere, so the native month sequence is retained. * UVI and RH values are operational captive starting points, not direct species-specific measurements. Food is feeding days per week during activity. Deep cooling is for healthy adults only: stop feeding before full cooling, maintain hydration, never allow freezing, and restore normal basking for several days before substantial feeding.

Practical Husbandry and Daily Management

Zagros oak-scrub husbandry: bright basking, seasonal dryness, secure cover, deep retreat and a genuine cool winter rest.

Enclosure and structure

For one adult, about 120 x 60 x 60 cm or larger is a practical starting point; a breeding pair benefits from around 160 x 80 x 70 cm or more. Provide stable rocks, cork, low branches and dense shrub-like cover. Use 15-20 cm or more of diggable soil/sand/clay and create several tight retreats. Adult males should not be housed together.

Heat, gradient and UVB

Use overhead radiant heat with an escapable basking surface around 38-44 C in full activity. Keep the cool end much lower so the animal can regulate continuously. No preferred temperature or UVI study was located for this species; peak UVI 3-4 is therefore a cautious high-light Timon starting point rather than a measured requirement.

Humidity and seasonal rainfall

Do not keep this species as a permanently bone-dry desert lizard. Wild records include shrubby oak woodland in a winter-wet, summer-dry climate. Keep exposed surfaces fairly dry from June to September, but retain a slightly moist deep refuge. Increase local moisture in autumn and spring while maintaining strong ventilation.

Winter brumation

Historical captive observations recorded animals becoming markedly inactive in autumn and inferred a natural 3-5 month winter sleep where frost and snow occur. A controlled 7-10 C winter rest for roughly December-February is a conservative breeding protocol. Cool only healthy, well-conditioned adults, after gut clearance, and never expose captive animals to freezing.

Nest provision

By late April, provide at least 20-25 cm of tunnel-holding soil/sand with a slightly moist lower layer. Keep part of the nest zone shaded and cooler than the basking site. A gravid female must be able to choose both moisture and depth rather than being forced to lay in a uniformly wet box.

Adult diet

Base the diet on varied gut-loaded invertebrates: crickets, locusts, roaches, grasshoppers, snails, silkworms and similar prey. Calcium should be provided regularly during the active season, especially to females. Soft fruit was accepted in the 1977 captive series, but it is best treated as occasional enrichment rather than a staple.

Juvenile diet

Offer small, well-fed insects frequently while growing, with access to calcium and UVB. Avoid oversized prey and excessive fatty larvae. Juveniles should not receive the deep adult winter cooling schedule until robust, established and appropriately conditioned.

Social management

The classic field/terrarium account explicitly described males as aggressive and kept them separately. One male-female pair was tolerated and often basked together, but this should not be assumed for every pair. Use multiple basking sites, feeding points and hides, with immediate separation capacity for pursuit, bites or resource exclusion.

Daily keeper checks

Check alertness, gait, toes/claws, eyes/nose, mouth, tail, skin, feces, hydration and body mass. During summer confirm that deep retreats remain cooler than the basking area. During breeding, monitor female body condition, abdominal contour, digging behaviour and calcium intake. During brumation, weigh and visually inspect at sensible intervals without repeatedly warming the animal.

Lighting sequence

Bright visible light is important for a diurnal lacertid. A related Timon lighting guide places jewelled lizards in a strong sunlight category; use the UV target together with intense visible illumination over the basking zone and deep shade nearby. During deep winter rest, basking heat and UVB are switched off.

Breeding, Eggs and Evidence Notes

Direct reproductive and thermal data remain limited, so measured facts and captive starting points are separated clearly.

Breeding timing

The native cycle strongly supports post-winter spring breeding. Use March for gradual reactivation and conditioning, April-May for courtship and pairing, and May-June as the most likely mating window. June-July is a practical main laying window. Reduce or stop pairing if the female is repeatedly chased or loses access to heat, food or retreats.

Clutch size

Published figures are not fully consistent. Older regional accounts for the taxon report around 5-10 eggs, while a compiled life-history dataset reports a mean clutch of 13.5. Treat clutch size as low-confidence and be prepared for a broader range rather than designing a nest around one fixed number.

Incubation

No controlled species-specific incubation experiment was located. A cautious starting point is about 26-27.5 C in a stable, slightly moist medium with no free water on the eggs. Captive summaries and related lacertid experience suggest roughly 55-80 days may be plausible, but actual temperature, duration, fertility and hatch success should be recorded for every clutch and used to refine the protocol.

Juvenile management

Start hatchlings with dense cover, a clear but gentler heat gradient, accessible UVB and frequent small prey. Provide a moist micro-retreat without keeping the whole enclosure damp. Growth, shedding, weight and feeding response should guide when the juvenile schedule is stepped toward adult conditions.

Why the winter rest matters

This is one of the strongest species-specific husbandry signals in the literature. The 1977 keepers observed autumn inactivity even with basking lamps still available, then moved the animals to cool winter containers; they linked this to the native area's frost and snow. For breeding adults, a true seasonal rest is therefore more defensible than year-round summer conditions.

Evidence confidence

Current species status and core range - High

Reptile Database; Ahmadzadeh et al. molecular work.

Oak-scrub / oak-forest habitat - High

Rykena, Nettmann & Bings 1977; Iranian lizard accounts.

Male-male aggression - High

Direct captive observations in the classic 1977 study.

Marked winter dormancy - High-moderate

Autumn inactivity observed in captivity; native frost/snow cited for 3-5 month rest.

Arthropod-dominant diet - High-moderate

Field summaries plus captive acceptance of crickets, grasshoppers and snails.

Peak UVI 3-4 / basking 38-44 C - Moderate

Captive translation using related Timon lighting/thermal data; not directly measured in *T. kurdistanicus*.

Clutch size - Low-moderate

Regional accounts and compiled datasets disagree.

Incubation 26-27.5 C - Low

Conservative keeper starting point; direct controlled study not located.

Key references

1. Reptile Database: *Timon kurdistanicus* (current taxonomy/range). 2. Rykena, Nettmann & Bings (1977), *Salamandra* 13: 174-184 - field and terrarium biology of *Lacerta princeps kurdistanica*. 3. Auer, Khudhur, Panner & Zoennchen (2021) - distribution, ecology and colouration. 4. Afrasiab, Mohamad & Hossain (2013) - Iraqi Lacertini records and measurements. 5. Iranian lizard checklist / Anderson accounts - Zagros oak-forest habitat. 6. Halabja-region climate normals - cold wet winters, very dry hot summers. 7. Reptile Lighting Guide V10 (2026) and *Timon lepidus* thermal literature used only as genus-level captive proxies where direct *T. kurdistanicus* measurements are absent.

UVI beneath the optional T5 tube

Timon kurdistanicus

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	Off
February	Off
March	2-3
April	3-4
May	3-4
June	4
July	4
August	4
September	3-4
October	2-3
November	1-2
December	Off

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](#).