

Haitian Curly Tail Lizard Care

My Haitian curly tail lizard is hiding in the sand. Should I dig him up, or leave him?

By Margaret A. Wissman, DVM, DABVP

I recently purchased a Haitian curly tail lizard. After the first day he buried himself in the sand and has not surfaced or eaten in four days. He was checked by a vet before the sell. He appeared to have a very thick tail and rear legs, and a round belly, which could be fat stores for hibernation. Should I dig him up, or leave him alone?

Hopefully, by the time you are reading this, your little curly tail will be checking out its new habitat. It is common for them to bury themselves in the sand when frightened or tired. Hopefully, you have several hiding places in its cage, made from rocks (that can't topple and crush your lizard), pieces of wood, plants or commercial hiding furniture.

The temperature gradient should be from the 70s to the 80s, with a basking spot that is 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Once your curly tail becomes comfortable in its new surroundings, its will most likely come up to explore its habitat, as long as it is being kept warm enough. Curly tails don't need to hibernate.

Provide appropriately sized insects once it comes up to check you out. Move slowly, and over time your lizard will come to realize that you mean it no harm and that you are the meal ticket. Then, in no time you should be able to handle it. Just make sure to always wash your hands after handling it to prevent the transmission of any diseases that it may have (which is unlikely). I hope this helps!

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