

# CARING FOR THE CHINESE WATER DRAGON

## *PHYSIGNATHUS COCINCINUS*

Chinese water dragons make good pets for beginners. They are fairly easy to care for and can generally be quite docile and friendly once they get used to their environment. They do require a large enclosure, complex lighting and heating systems, and a careful diet, so be sure you're prepared to meet their needs before committing to owning one.



### A Brief History!

Chinese water dragons were first domesticated in the 1980s. The popularity of Chinese water dragons as pets grew in part due to their interesting behavior and attractive appearance.

The geographic range of Chinese water dragons is from southern China, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. The species was first classified by the Austrian Naturalist, Johann Jakob Kaup, in 1839.

### Habitat Requirements

Chinese crested water dragons require a large habitat that can accommodate a minimum of 40 gallons of water. The habitat should be outfitted with a secure lid, as crested water dragons are excellent climbers and can easily escape. Additional decorations, such as rocks, logs, and branches, can be added to the habitat to simulate the dragon's natural environment. The habitat should also include basking and hiding spots. The substrate should be water-absorbent and easy to clean.

Chinese crested water dragons prefer a warm environment. The habitat should be kept between 80–90°F, with a basking spot of 90–95°F. The environment should remain humid, with a humidity level of 70–80%.

### Proper Diet, Snacks

Chinese crested water dragons should be fed a diet rich in protein and calcium. The diet should include a variety of live insects and invertebrates, such as crickets, mealworms, waxworms, and earthworms. Vegetables and fruits can also be offered as occasional treats.

In addition to their regular diet, crested water dragons should be offered occasional treats such as waxworms, mealworms, crickets, and earthworms.



### Is my pet healthy?

Check the eyes – Healthy eyes are clear and bright without any discharge.

Check the skin – Healthy skin is smooth, without any lumps or bumps, and has a vibrant coloration.

Check the body weight – A healthy dragon should have a rounded body shape with no visible ribs or spine.

Always consult with a veterinarian for questions regarding your water dragon's health!

### Exercise & Enrichment



Crested water dragons need plenty of exercise to stay healthy. Owners can provide their dragon with a large swimming area, or take their dragon outside for supervised swimming in a pond or lake.

Crested water dragons need enrichment activities to keep them mentally and physically stimulated. Owners can provide their dragon with interactive toys, such as balls and puzzles, as well as hiding spots and basking areas. Owners can also take their dragon outside for supervised swimming and walks.