

Duprasi

Written by Carraig Stanwyck



What pocket pet is the cuddliest, with the softest fur, and almost a complete lack of odor? If you guessed Duprasi, you're right. Hailing from the deserts of Northern Africa, the Duprasi is arguably the most docile small pet on the market today. With a body between 4 and 5 inches in length it is larger than a mouse yet less than half the size of a grown rat. By nature an insectivore, Duprasi have a pointed snout and a yearning for insects that will astonish you. Be it moth or mealworm, it's Duprasi dessert. The fur of the Duprasi is so soft and fine that it puts the rest of the rodent world to shame. In fact, unless you keep your new Duprasi on sand, it will need a weekly dust bath in a high quality chinchilla dust which will keep its fur soft and healthy. Of all the characteristics that define the Duprasi, the most distinguishing is its very unique tail. Lack of water in the desert has caused the Duprasi to adapt with a short, club-shaped tail designed to store fat and water much like a camel's hump. In captivity this functional tail serves a second function as a health meter. Healthy Duprasi will have a nicely plump tail.

Choosing Your New Pet

Ever since monkey pox broke out in Africa it has been illegal to import Duprasi into this country. This, and difficulty with breeding, has caused their number to diminish significantly in captivity. Fortunately for you TCF Exotics breeds some of the finest specimens available in captivity.

Now that you've decided a Duprasi is for you, there are some things you must consider. In nature, Duprasi are primarily solitary, coming together only to breed. It's the same way in captivity. Although males will usually get along in pairs and small groups, females and male/female pairs will not get along, especially for extended periods of time. Females are very territorial unlike the males, which usually aren't. If all you want is a single animal, sex really isn't much of a concern, however if you'd like more than one you need to either choose all males or have the facilities to house them separately. Next, whether you are investing in one of our Duprasi, or buying one from another source, you need to ensure that it's healthy. Duprasi which are healthy and awake will be alert with clear, wide-open eyes. They will have a soft, smooth coat and their underside will be free from stains. A Duprasi's tail also says a lot about its health.

The tail should be firm and plump. Males will have a thicker tail because the female's body taxes the nutrients stored in the tail much more than the male body does.

Housing

Your new Duprasi will live happy and healthy in an aquarium no smaller than a 10gal aquarium. If you decide to keep multiple Duprasi, up to 3 males will live comfortably in a 20gal aquarium. Duprasi love to sleep, up to 20 hours per day, so they will require a comfortable bed. A layer of bedding no less than 2 inches deep will be sufficient. Suitable bedding includes wood chips such as aspen or paper based litter such as Carefresh™. NEVER use cedar chips because they are toxic and your pet WILL become ill. Duprasi also love to chew. If you don't provide things for them to chew, they will happily chew whatever they have at hand – be it their water bottle, food bowl, or hideaway. Good chew toys consist of toilet paper tubes, tissue boxes (with plastic removed), and cardboard egg cartons. A hideaway or nest box should be provided in which most Duprasi will build their nest. Also, included in the cage should be a water bottle with a metal guard and a stoneware or metal food dish. Some Duprasi will run on a wheel so it's a good idea to provide one. The Duprasi's cage should be cleaned no less than twice a month. Because their waste has virtually no odor, don't be fooled by a cage that smells clean. It's best to clean at a set interval rather than wait for it to become obviously dirty.

Food and Water

When Duprasi aren't sleeping they are eating food, chewing cardboard, and eating more food. They eat an amazing amount of food for their size. Because of this, it is vital that they get fresh food daily. Duprasi food consists of a good hamster/gerbil diet supplemented with daily protein in the form of high quality kitten chow or insects such as crickets or mealworms. Here at TCF Exotics we mix ½ cup of IAMS Kitten Chow into every 4 pounds of hamster/gerbil mix. Duprasi like the occasional vegetable such as carrots or lettuce, but give these in extreme moderation. If you feed too many high moisture vegetables, their body won't be able to process the water and your pet Duprasi could die. Duprasi don't drink much water, absorbing most of their water from the food they eat. Regardless, it's important that they have fresh drinking water available at all times.

Images and content copyright © 2005 and is owned exclusively by TCF Exotics unless otherwise stated. Reproduction in part or whole is unauthorized without express written consent of TCF Exotics www.TCFexotics.com.