INSIDE FLAP • KEEPER HABITS

4 Keys to Long-Term Health

Small Daily Habits That Prevent 95% of Vet Visits

Overwatering Kills 10× Faster

Succulents and Snake Plants store weeks of water inside their leaves and caudex. When in doubt, wait another week before spot-watering!

Wait 3–5 Days After Planting

When you bare-root a succulent and plant it into your tank, wait 3–5 days before watering so any microscopic root scrapes callous dry.

Heat Bulbs Aren't Plant Lights

Halogen heat bulbs emit infrared/heat, not balanced 6500K daylight. Pair your basking lamp and UVB tube with a 6500K LED bar.

Arid Isopod Match

Pair Temperate White or Arid Springtails with **Powder Blue / Powder Orange** (*P. pruinosus*) or burrowing **Giant Canyon Isopods** (*P. dilatatus*).

Quarantine & Bare-Rooting Reminder: Always pop new succulents out of their nursery pots, gently brush off peat/perlite potting mix (which holds too much moisture and contains white perlite beads reptiles may mistake for calcium), and run a **3 to 6 week grow-out** on general garden-center plants before placing them with plant-nibbling lizards or tortoises.

BACK COVER • TAKE THIS TO THE AISLE

Grab-and-Go Setup Checklist

1. GRITTY ARID BIOACTIVE SUBSTRATE

- [ ] ReptiSoil + Play Sand / ReptiSand + Excavator Clay (4–5" Deep)
- [ ] Lava Rock / Pumice Grit + Flat Slate Stones (Around Stems)
- [ ] Dry Live Oak Leaf Litter + Seed Pods + Cork Bark Flats
- [ ] Handful of Sphagnum Moss (Under Cool-Side Cork ONLY)

2. SPINELESS ARID PLANT BUNDLE

- [ ] 1–2 Anchors: Sansevieria ('Futura Superba'/'Mikado') or Ponytail Palm
- [ ] 1–2 Mid/Cool Succulents: Zebra Haworthia or Gasteria
- [ ] 1–2 Warm Basking Succulents: Crassula Jade, Portulacaria, or Sedum

3. LIGHTING, WATERING & CLEAN-UP CREW

- [ ] Full-Spectrum 6500K LED Bar + Linear T5 HO UVB on 12-Hr Timer
- [ ] Narrow-Spout Squeeze Bottle (Spot-Water Roots Every 2–4 Wks)
- [ ] Powder Blue / Powder Orange OR Giant Canyon Isopods + Springtails

MY ARID VIVARIUM PLANT & WATERING LOG & FEEDING LOG

Enclosure & Species: _____

Plants & Clean-Up Crew: _____

Watering / Misting Schedule: _____

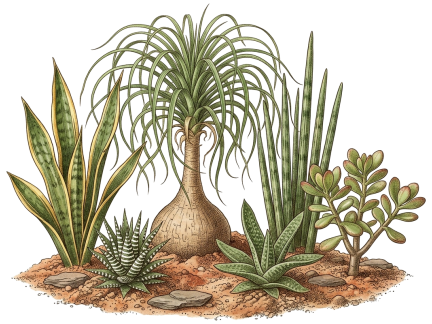
Critter Cabana & Cascade Pet Supply

Questions about bioactive soil, plant lighting, or isopods? Stop by Newberg or Gresham anytime — we're here for the full years of thriving desert scape!

CRITTER CABANA & CASCADE PET SUPPLY • CARE GUIDE

Arid & Desert Bioactive Plants (Succulents & Snake Plants)

Dwarf Sansevieria (Snake Plants) • Ponytail Palm • Spineless Haworthia & Gasteria • Jade, Sedum & Sempervivum



The Quick Version: You don't need a rainforest tank to go bioactive! Arid and semi-arid enclosures (10 to 75 gallons) for **Leopard Geckos, Bearded Dragons, Uromastyx, Kenyan Sand Boas, Western Hognose Snakes, and Arid Tarantulas** thrive with live desert plants when you follow three rules: **1. Use 100% spineless, terrarium-sized plants** (never sharp cacti or 3-foot floor Sansevieria!), **2. Plant in a gritty, fast-draining soil-and-sand mix with NO waterlogged drainage layer**, and **3. Spot-water root balls sparingly** while keeping one damp moss pocket under cool-side cork for your isopods!

QUICK VITAL STATS AT-A-GLANCE

BEST FOR	SAFETY RULE
Leopard Geckos, Beardies & Hognose	**100% Spineless (No Sharp Cacti!)**
LIGHTING	SUBSTRATE
Bright 6500K LED + Linear T5 UVB	**4–5" Gritty Arid Mix (No LECA)**

WATERING

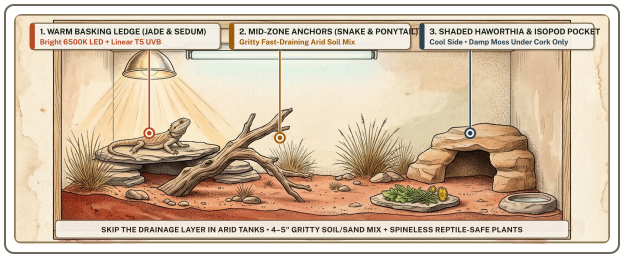
Spot-Water Roots Every 2–4 Wks

OPEN FOR PLANTING ZONES, SPECIES NOTES, CARE & CHECKLIST →

STEP 1 • ZONES, SOIL & PREP

Arid Bioactive Blueprint & 'Dry Top / Damp Pocket'

Succulents Hate Wet Feet, While Isopods Need a Damp Cool-Side Retreat!



1. Basking Sun Zone
88–105°F warm side under bright 6500K LED + UVB: Jade, Sedum, Portulacaria
Full Sun Lovers

2. Heavy-Duty Anchors
Mid-zone: Snake Plants (Sansevieria) & Ponytail Palm handle heavy claws
Claw-Proof Armor

3. Cool / Shaded Side
72–80°F cool end: Zebra Haworthia & Gasteria thrive without scorching
Shade-Tolerant

4. Skip Drainage Layer
Pack 4–5" gritty Arid Bioactive Soil/Sand mix straight on bottom glass
Fast-Drainage Grit

5. Isopod Moss Pocket
Tuck damp sphagnum under cool-side cork bark ONLY — keep succulent roots dry!
Clean-Up Refuge

6500K LED & Pure Water Rule: Reptile heat and UVB bulbs don't emit plant-growth spectra — pair them with a **6500K full-spectrum LED bar** and always mist with **RO, distilled, or dechlorinated water**!

STEP 2 • STOCKED STORE OPTIONS

Two Ways That Work

Pick Option A or Option B Based on Your Home Setup

Rule #1: Why Spineless Succulents Beat Cacti in Reptile Tanks

Inside an enclosure, cactus spines and microscopic glochids pierce reptile eyes, tongues, and bellies:

100% REPTILE-SAFE SPINELESS CHAMPIONS (SANSEVIERIA, PONYTAIL PALM, HAWORTHIA, GASTERIA, JADE)

Our arid section at Newberg and Gresham is curated around **spineless architectural plants: Snake Plants** ('Futura Superba', 'Mikado', 'Bonji'), **Ponytail Palms** (*Beaucarnea recurvata*), **Zebra Haworthia**, **Gasteria**, **Crassula Jade**, and **Sedum**.

WHICH ARID PLANTS ARE SAFE IF NIBBLED BY BEARDED DRAGONS, TORTOISES, OR UROMASTYX?

Insectivores & Snakes (Leopard Geckos, Hognose, Sand Boas) ignore plants, so all spineless succulents work. For **herbivores/omnivores (Bearded Dragons, Tortoises, Uromastyx)**, prioritize edible-safe **Elephant Bush** (*Portulacaria afra*), **Haworthia**, **Gasteria**, **Ponytail Palm**, and **Sedum** (after a 3–6 week grow-out if from a general nursery).

Rule #2: Gritty Arid Substrate vs. The 'Buried Terracotta Pot' Trick

Standard potting soil holds too much moisture and rots succulent roots:

OPTION A: DIRECT PLANTING IN OUR GRITTY 10-PART ARID BIOACTIVE MIX

Skip the LECA drainage layer! Blend **Zoo Med ReptiSoil + Washed Play Sand / ReptiSand + Excavator Clay + Lava Rock / Pumice grit** (4–5" deep). Gently brush peat/perlite off roots and plant into dry-to-lightly-damp gritty mix.

OPTION B: BURIED TERRACOTTA POTS FOR HEAVY DIGGERS & BULLDOZERS

Have a Bearded Dragon, Uromastyx, or Hognose Snake that digs up roots? Plant your *Sansevieria* or *Haworthia* in a small **unglazed terracotta pot** with gritty cactus soil, sink the pot flush into the substrate, and armor the rim with flat slate stones!

Rule #3: How to Water Arid Plants Without Spiking Tank Humidity

Never mist an arid succulent tank like a frog vivarium — spray bottles rot crowns and raise humidity too high:

SPOT-WATER THE ROOT ZONE ONLY (EVERY 2 TO 4 WEEKS)

Use a narrow-spout squeeze bottle to pour a few tablespoons of dechlorinated water **directly at the base of each plant every 2–4 weeks** (only after the soil has dried completely). Never pour water into the center rosette of *Echeveria* or *Sempervivum*.

HOW YOUR CLEAN-UP CREW THRIVES IN AN ARID TANK

Place a flat piece of cork bark on the cool side with a handful of damp **Sphagnum Moss** and oak leaves tucked underneath. Re-moisten just that hidden moss pocket weekly so **Powder Blue/Orange** or **Giant Canyon Isopods** have a humid underground

STEP 3 • SPECIES CHEAT SHEET

Species-by-Species Cheat Sheet (10–75 Gal Vivariums)

Little Prince & Josh's Frogs Arid Stock — Light Zone & Nibbler Safety

Claw-Proof Structural Anchors
Dwarf Snake Plants (Sansevieria) & Tabletop Ponytail Palms

Dwarf Sansevieria (Bird's Nest 'Hahnii', starfish 'Bonji', mini cylindrical 'Mikado', & compact 'Futura Superba' — staying 6–15" tall for 20–75 gal tanks!) tolerate bright-to-moderate light, 30–50% RH, and heavy reptile claws. **Tabletop Ponytail Palm** (*Beaucarnea recurvata*) stores water in its bulbous base (keep bulb above soil!) while its grassy leaves create a natural hide.

Armor-Plated Mid & Cool Zone
Haworthia, Gasteria & Dwarf Spineless Aloe

Zebra & Cooper's Haworthia (*Haworthiopsis attenuata, H. cooperi*) and **Ox-Tongue** (*Gasteria* 'Little Warty') have thick, textured leaves that stand up to crawling geckos and thrive on the **moderate-light cool or mid side** where high-light *Echeveria* would stretch out. Non-toxic and 100% spineless!

High-Light Basking Succulents
Crassula (Jade), Portulacaria, Sedum, Sempervivum & Echeveria

Crassula ('Crosby's Compact', 'Gollum', 'Hobbit', 'Ripple' Jade, 'Watch Chain'), **Elephant Bush** (*Portulacaria afra*), **Sedum** ('Shooting Stars', 'Gold Mound', Burro's Tail), & **Sempervivum** (Hens & Chicks) need **direct, bright 6500K LED + UVB light** on the warm side so they stay compact and colorful instead of stretching ('etiolating').

Arid Plant Troubleshooting & Care Rules:

- **Stretching / Tall Stems?:** Called 'etiolation' — move the succulent closer to your 6500K daylight LED bar
- **Mushy / Yellow Translucent Leaves?:** Sign of overwatering — let soil dry 100% between spot-waterings!
- **Wrinkled / Flat Bottom Leaves?:** Plant is drawing on stored water — give the root ball a targeted drink
- **Ring Roots With Flat Slate:** Lay flat slate or river stones around stems so burrowers can't uproot them

Rinsing vs. 3–6 Week Grow-Out Rule: Rinsing roots removes loose soil, NOT systemic pesticides. Plants from general garden centers need a **3–6 week grow-out quarantine** before entering an animal