

REPTILE PARASITES

Do Your Critters Have Critters?

Ticks and Mites are the most common external **reptile parasites** stressing the overall health of the victim. Both feed on the blood of its host, and a severe infestation can cause anemia. Although a parasite harms its host, it does not usually kill the host or it would eventually run out of a place to live.



TICKS

Small round, brown or black creatures, ticks can be seen attached to the skin, under the scales or in the nostrils or vent of reptiles. After feeding on blood, they become engorged and easier to see. Besides causing anemia, ticks can carry diseases that can be transmitted to other animals and people, such as Lyme disease. A tick can be manually removed by grabbing the head with a tweezers and pulling firmly outward. Do not twist or jerk or grasp the body.

MITES

Mites are very small and difficult to detect. Mites may cause open skin lesions, crusting and an overall dull appearance. Affected animals may have a poor appetite, be depressed, be seen rubbing against objects or soaking for longer periods. Mites may noticed as "black pepper" crawling on snakes or small orange or red dots in skin folds, around the dewlap and eyes of lizards. You may also notice on your skin after handling the reptile (some people may be allergic) or floating in the water.

Your veterinarian can confirm diagnosis and prescribe a safe and effective treatment. It is critical to also thoroughly clean the habitat, including substrate, rocks, and all cage items with an effective miticide approved for reptiles, allowing all to dry and vapors to disappear before your pet returns back to its home.

QUESTIONS?

Think your critter might have critters?

Contact ANIMART's Creepy Crawly specialists at 608.242.2140 ext 4253 (Madison) or 920.885.2814 (Beaver Dam) or email vetclinic@animart.com for more information about **reptile parasites** and keeping your reptiles healthy.