

Crested Anole (*Anolis cristatellus*)



Description: The Crested Anole is a relatively recent introduction to Miami, coming from Puerto Rico in the mid-1970s. This species is usually found on the ground up to around 1.5 m high, typically perching on tree trunks, fences, and houses. In contrast to the Brown Anole, which better tolerates open, sunny areas, the Crested Anole often sticks to shadier habitats. Male dewlaps are yellow in the center with an orange border and range from pale to bright. The largest males are about 7 cm snout-vent length, whereas females are usually less than 5 cm snout-vent length.

Key features: The Crested Anole is olive-tan to almost black in color and individual lizards can change color. Broad bands on the body and tail can be found on some individuals. The easiest distinguishing feature, as the name suggests, is the prominent crest found on the tail of adult males – but not all males have tail crests! This species is easily confused with the Brown Anole, which is about the same size and similar in behavior and habits. As compared to the Brown Anole, the Crested Anole has a light ring around the eye and a light stripe above the front limb. Also, females have a cream-colored stripe in the middle of their back.