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CHAMELEONS

African Chameleon

Chamaeleo africanus

Chamaeleo africanus is an arboreal chameleon from the dry savanna of the Sahel and along the Nile, from Mauritania to Sudan and Upper Egypt. It is often green with many black spots, has no lobes at the back of the head and reaches 23-46 cm in length. The species is rarely kept, and its care draws on its climate and on better-known species of the genus. It must live alone in a tall mesh enclosure with UVB.

Family: Chamaeleonidae Former name: *Chamaeleo aegyptius; Chamaeleo calcaratus; Chamaeleo candidus; Chamaeleo mexicanus; Chamaeleo basiliscus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**23-46 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**4-8 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Savanna and wetland**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 60 × 120 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**25-30 °C**
Basking spot	**32-35 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-22 °C**
Humidity	**40-60%**
Water	**No water dish**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**20-70 eggs**
Incubation	**90 days** at 28 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Little is known about the care of *Chamaeleo africanus*, and the species is rarely kept.
TEMPERATURE	*Chamaeleo africanus* needs 25-30 °C by day and a basking spot at 32-35 °C. At night the temperature should fall to 18-22 °C. The figures are borrowed from *Chamaeleo dilepis* and suit a warm savanna climate.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity for *Chamaeleo africanus* should be around 40-60%. The figure is an estimate for dry savanna and is slightly below that for *Chamaeleo dilepis*.
LIGHTING AND UVB	*Chamaeleo africanus* is diurnal and needs full-spectrum light and UVB for 12-14 hours a day. The UVB source should be no more than about 30 cm from the animal.
FEEDING	*Chamaeleo africanus* is an insectivore and needs live insects such as crickets, cockroaches and silkworms. The insects should be well fed on a calcium-rich diet and dusted with a mineral and vitamin supplement before being given.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Chamaeleo africanus* should preferably not be handled. The animal must live alone, and the enclosure should have many hiding places in the foliage.
NATIVE RANGE	Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Sudan, South Sudan and Egypt.