herpy

CHAMELEONS

Graceful Chameleon

Chamaeleo gracilis

Chamaeleo gracilis is a medium to large, green to yellowish brown chameleon with a low casque, almost no lobes and a pale stripe along the flank. It lives in forests, scrub and savannas across large parts of Africa south of the Sahara and is one of the most common chameleons in the trade, where almost all animals are wild-caught. It needs a tall mesh enclosure with UVB, drinks only droplets and must live alone.

Family: Chamaeleonidae Former name: *Chamaeleo burchelli; Chamaeleo granulosus; Chamaeleo simoni*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**30-40 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**3-5 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Savanna, dry forest and rainforest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 45 × 90 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**21-26 °C**
Basking spot	**26-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**15-20 °C**
Humidity	**50-70%**
Water	**No water dish**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**4-5 months**
Clutch size	**20-40 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-2**
Incubation	**210-365 days** at 22-27 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

Chamaeleo gracilis is not a beginner species. Care is the same as for the closely related *Chamaeleo dilepis* and *Chamaeleo senegalensis*, and where figures are missing for the species itself, they are borrowed from them.

TEMPERATURE

By day the temperature in the enclosure with *Chamaeleo gracilis* should be 21-26 °C, and on a basking branch it should be 26-32 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Humidity for *Chamaeleo gracilis* should be 50-70%. This is achieved by misting several times a day over all surfaces and with live plants; in a dry room, a cool-mist fogger or a timer-controlled rain system can help.

LIGHTING AND UVB

Chamaeleo gracilis is diurnal and needs 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness. A UVB tube or UVB bulb is necessary, because the animal synthesises D3 in its skin and needs it to absorb calcium.

FEEDING

Chamaeleo gracilis eats live insects: crickets, silkworms, hornworms, cockroaches such as *Blaptica dubia* and the occasional superworm. Mealworms and waxworms are fatty and are given only as a change.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Chamaeleo gracilis is shy but relatively calm around humans. It is an animal to look at, not to pick up. Handling stresses it and should only be done when necessary.

NATIVE RANGE

Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo - Kinshasa, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.