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CHAMELEONS

## Namaqua Chameleon

# *Chamaeleo namaquensis*

*Chamaeleo namaquensis* is a stocky, ground-dwelling chameleon from the deserts of south-western Africa. It hardly climbs at all, but runs fast over sand and gravel, buries itself and hunts actively. The animals are fiercely territorial and must live alone. Very little is known about their care, and the species is one of the most difficult chameleons to keep.

Family: Chamaeleonidae  Former name: *Chamaeleo capensis; Chamaeleo tuberculiferus*

**KEY FACTS**

### THE ANIMAL

| | |
|---|---|
| Adult size | **20-25 cm**<br>total length incl. tail |
| Lifespan | **3-5 years** |
| Active | **By day** |
| Lifestyle | **Terrestrial and burrowing** |
| Habitat | **Desert and semi-desert** |
| Difficulty | **Expert** |

### CARE

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|---|---|
| Min. enclosure | **120 × 60 × 60 cm**<br>L × W × H for 1 adult |
| Temperature, day | **25-30 °C** |
| Basking spot | **35-40 °C** |
| Temperature, night | **15-20 °C** |
| Humidity | **30-50%** |
| Water | **No water dish** |
| UVB | **Essential**<br>Ferguson zone 4 |
| Diet | **Insects and plants** |
| Kept | **Singly** |

### BREEDING

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|---|---|
| Reproduction | **Egg-laying** |
| Sexually mature | **5-7 months** |
| Clutch size | **6-22 eggs** |
| Clutches per year | **2-3** |
| Incubation | **90-120 days**<br>at 25-28 °C |

### PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

## Care at a glance

**THE ENCLOSURE**
Very little is known about the care of *Chamaeleo namaquensis*, and the species is among the most difficult chameleons to keep.

**TEMPERATURE**
There are no documented captive figures for the species. The recommendations here are derived from the climate in the range: ground temperature in the wild is 27-35 °C, summer air up to 38 °C and summer nights about 10 °C.

**HUMIDITY AND WATER**
Humidity should be low, 30-50 %, and the substrate should be dry. This is a desert climate, where the early morning air can reach about 50 % and where the animal gets moisture from fog and dew.

**LIGHTING AND UVB**
The species is diurnal and lives in open landscape with plenty of sun, so it needs strong light and UVB for 12 hours and darkness for 12 hours. UVB is necessary.

**FEEDING**
*Chamaeleo namaquensis* eats mostly beetles, locusts and other arthropods, in the wild also lizards and snakes and a little plant material. The animal hunts all day and is very greedy.

**BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING**
*Chamaeleo namaquensis* is bold and does not back away from other animals or objects. It rests in the hottest hours of the day and then goes hunting again.

**NATIVE RANGE**
Namibia, South Africa and Angola.