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CHAMELEONS

Lesser Chameleon

Furcifer minor

Furcifer minor is a small chameleon from the central highlands of Madagascar. The male is beige and brown with two nose horns, while the female is the colourful one, especially when gravid. The species reaches 16-23 cm in total length, is threatened in the wild and is rare in captivity. It needs a keeper with chameleon experience, not least because females easily develop egg-laying problems.

Family: Chamaeleonidae Former name: *Chamaeleo minor*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**16-23 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**2-4 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Savanna, dry forest and montane forest**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**45 × 45 × 60 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**21-26 °C**
Basking spot	**32-38 °C**
Temperature, night	**15-20 °C**
Humidity	**60-100%**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**5-9 months**
Clutch size	**4-18 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-3**
Incubation	**190-270 days** at 22-24 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Endangered (EN)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	An adult needs an enclosure of at least 45 × 45 × 60 cm (length × width × height). The species is small and does not require a large enclosure, but some animals are more restless and do better with more space.
TEMPERATURE	The daytime temperature should be 21-26 °C. Provide a basking spot of 32-38 °C, measured as surface temperature with an IR thermometer, and keep the floor cooler.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity should be 60-100 %. The species comes from an area with high humidity, but the enclosure must dry out during the day to avoid standing water and disease.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is diurnal and sun-loving and needs strong light. Use a T5 tube of 6500 K for light and a UVB tube that gives Ferguson zone 3 at the basking spot; the zone is borrowed from *Furcifer pardalis*.
FEEDING	*F. minor* is a pure insectivore. Offer a varied selection: crickets, cockroaches, mealworm beetles and fruit flies.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The species is kept singly, and two animals are put together only for mating. The animals are aggressive towards conspecifics, including the young, and can seriously injure one another.
NATIVE RANGE	Madagascar.