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CHAMELEONS

Oustalet's Chameleon

Furcifer oustaleti

Furcifer oustaleti is one of the largest chameleons in the world. The male reaches up to 68 cm in total length, the female about 40 cm. The male is grey and brown with a tall casque, while the female may show red, yellow and green markings. The species is highly adaptable in the wild, but requires a large, tall enclosure, strong UVB and a keeper with chameleon experience.

Family: Chamaeleonidae Former name: *Chamaeleo oustaleti*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**40-68 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**3-5 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Savanna, dry forest and rainforest**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**90 × 90 × 120 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-30 °C**
Basking spot	**35-40 °C**
Temperature, night	**16-21 °C**
Humidity	**60-100%**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**6-12 months**
Clutch size	**20-40 eggs**
Clutches per year	**2-4**
Incubation	**243-365 days** at 20-28 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	An adult needs an enclosure of at least 90 × 90 × 120 cm (length × width × height), and more is better, especially in height. The species grows large, and dimensions that suit smaller chameleons are far too small.
TEMPERATURE	The daytime temperature should be 24-30 °C, with a basking spot of 35-40 °C measured as surface temperature with an IR thermometer. The figures for the basking spot, the night and the UVB zone are borrowed from *Furcifer pardalis*.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity should be 60-100 %, with the highest values at night and after misting. The species is often considered to like dry conditions, but this is wrong: it has a high need for water. Offer water every day.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is diurnal and sun-loving and requires strong light and UVB. Use a T5 HO tube of 6500 K and a UVB tube that gives Ferguson zone 3 at the basking spot. Give the animal the chance to seek shade.
FEEDING	*F. oustaleti* is primarily an insectivore. Offer a varied selection: crickets, grasshoppers, cockroaches, mealworms and superworms. Large animals will also readily take larger prey.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The species is kept singly. The male is territorial, and the animals are moderately aggressive towards conspecifics. Towards the keeper most are calm, but some are defensive and bite. Handling stresses the animal.
NATIVE RANGE	Madagascar.