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CHAMELEONS

Usambara soft-horned chameleon

Kinyongia tenuis

Kinyongia tenuis is a small, slender chameleon from the Usambara Mountains in Tanzania and the Shimba Hills in Kenya. It is brown and grey with a long tail and long legs and lives high up in damp, cool rainforest. The species lays eggs. It is rare in captivity, and its care is only sparsely described.

Family: Chamaeleonidae English name: Usambara Soft-horned Chameleon Former name: *Bradypodion tenue; Kinyongia tenue; Chamaeleo tenuis*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**15 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**5-7 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Rainforest**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 45 × 90 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**20-25 °C**
Basking spot	**26-28 °C**
Temperature, night	**14-18 °C**
Humidity	**70-100%**
Water	**No water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**9-12 months**
Clutch size	**12-20 eggs**
Incubation	**240-330 days** at 17-23 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

The species is rare in captivity, and its care is only sparsely described. This guide is based on the climate of its range and on the better-known species from the same area, *Kinyongia fischeri* and *Trioceros deremensis*.

TEMPERATURE

The daytime temperature should be 20-25 °C with a moderate basking spot of 26-28 °C, and at night the temperature should fall to 14-18 °C. Heat above 30 °C must be avoided. Keep the air moving so that it does not become stagnant.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Humidity should be high, 70-100 %, and highest at night and in the morning. The animal drinks droplets and should not have a water dish.

LIGHTING AND UVB

The species is diurnal and needs a bright but not too warm enclosure. UVB is recommended, and Ferguson zone 2 is an estimate for a forest chameleon.

FEEDING

Kinyongia tenuis eats insects. Crickets, cockroaches, silkworms and small locusts of a suitable size are good choices, as for the related species. Feeder insects should be captive-reared and gut-loaded.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Chameleons are easily stressed by handling, and this probably applies to *Kinyongia tenuis* as well. Do not pick the animal up without reason.

NATIVE RANGE

Kenya and Tanzania.