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CHAMELEONS

Spectral Pygmy Chameleon

Rhampholeon spectrum

Rhampholeon spectrum is a small, leaf-like chameleon of 7-10 cm from the forest floor of West and Central Africa. It is greenish brown to grey like a dead leaf, with two slanting dark stripes on the sides and a small, soft flap of skin on the snout. It is kept in a small, humid, densely planted enclosure with a thick layer of leaf litter. Its care is little known, so the figures are based on close relatives.

Family: Chamaeleonidae Former name: *Brookesia spectrum; Chamaeleo spectrum; Rhampholeon affinis*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**7-10 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**2-4 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Rainforest and montane forest**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**40 × 30 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**20-25 °C**
Temperature, night	**16-20 °C**
Humidity	**70-95%**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Insects and small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**3-9 months**
Clutch size	**2-5 eggs**
Incubation	**150-210 days** at 18-23 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Little is known about the care of *Rhampholeon spectrum*.
TEMPERATURE	The daytime temperature must be 20-25 °C and the night temperature 16-20 °C. The drop at night comes by itself when the lamps are switched off.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	The humidity should be 70-95 % by day and 80-95 % at night. Mist the enclosure thoroughly at least twice a day, in the morning and again in the evening, with lukewarm water.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is diurnal and lives in shade, so the light must resemble the forest's subdued light.
FEEDING	The species eats small insects and other arthropods: fruit flies, small crickets, bean beetles, grain weevils, small cockroaches and springtails for the youngest. Prey may be at most about 20 % of the animal's body length.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The species is kept singly. Aggression between conspecifics is low, but two animals together easily stress the subordinate one, so they are put together only for mating.
NATIVE RANGE	Cameroon, Congo - Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea, Central African Republic, Gabon and Nigeria.