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GECKOS

Giant ground gecko

Chondrodactylus angulifer

A large, robust ground gecko from the deserts of south-western Africa. It has no adhesive pads, but short, spiny toes that give it grip in loose sand and make it a skilled digger. By day it sleeps in a burrow of its own making, and at night it hunts termites and other arthropods. In the terrarium it needs a deep layer of sand and a humid hide.

Family: Gekkonidae Former name: *Chondrodactylus angulifer namibensis*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**15-18 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**10-11 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial and burrowing**
Habitat	**Desert**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 40 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**27-30 °C**
Basking spot	**35 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-24 °C**
Humidity	**35-50%**
UVB	**Optional**
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly, in pairs or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**10-12 months**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-4**
Incubation	**55-65 days** at 28-30 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Not listed**
EU annex	**Not listed**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE
A pair will manage in a terrarium of at least 60 × 40 × 40 cm (length × width × height), and the same size suits a single animal. If you are keeping a male with two females, a little more floor area is an advantage.

TEMPERATURE
During the day the background temperature should be 27-30 °C, with a cool zone of 24-25 °C and a local hot spot of around 35 °C. At night the temperature should fall to 18-24 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER
The species comes from dry regions and must be kept dry. The humidity should be around 35-50 %, preferably a little lower in winter, and ventilation should be good. Avoid soaking the enclosure.

LIGHTING AND UVB
The species is nocturnal and spends the day underground, so it gets almost no direct sunlight. Keep the light on for 12-14 hours in summer and 8-10 hours in winter, controlled by a timer, and keep it completely dark at night.

FEEDING
The gecko has a good appetite and is not fussy. Crickets, locusts and cockroaches make a good staple diet, and mealworms and wax moth larvae can be given for variety.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING
The gecko is calm, but not an animal for handling. It can bite hard if grabbed, and it is best enjoyed by watching. If it has to be moved, do so calmly and close to the ground, and never take hold of the tail.

NATIVE RANGE
Namibia, South Africa and Botswana.