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GECKOS

Mediterranean house gecko

Hemidactylus turcicus

Hemidactylus turcicus is a small, pale, warty gecko that accompanies humans all around the Mediterranean and hunts insects on house walls at night. It is hardy and easy to keep, but an experienced hand at the enclosure helps, because many facts about its care in captivity are only sparsely documented.

Family: Gekkonidae Former name: *Lacerta turcica; Gekko turcicus; Hemidactylus verruculatus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**10-13 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**3-9 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Rock-dwelling**
Habitat	**Semi-desert and rocky terrain**
Difficulty	**Beginner**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**45 × 30 × 60 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-28 °C**
Basking spot	**28-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-22 °C**
Humidity	**50-70%**
UVB	**Optional**
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**5-12 months**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-4**
Incubation	**40-60 days** at 29-31 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

The care of *Hemidactylus turcicus* in captivity is not scientifically documented. A single animal can be kept in an enclosure of 45 × 30 × 60 cm (length × width × height).

TEMPERATURE

By day the enclosure is kept at 24-28 °C, and a small warm spot can reach 28-32 °C. At night the temperature may fall to 18-22 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Keep humidity between 50 and 70 %. *Hemidactylus turcicus* comes from dry to semi-arid regions and manages with moderate humidity.

LIGHTING AND UVB

Hemidactylus turcicus is nocturnal and, to all appearances, does not need UVB to manage. A weak UVB tube can nevertheless give a clear daily rhythm, and it does no harm if there is shade and cover throughout the enclosure.

FEEDING

Hemidactylus turcicus is an insectivore. In the wild it takes moths, cockroaches, caterpillars, grasshoppers, earwigs, mosquitoes, cicadas, ants, spiders and woodlice, and it prefers live prey to dead.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Hemidactylus turcicus is calm and can become used to the hand, but it is fast, shy and not an animal to be handled regularly. Give a new animal a couple of weeks in peace.

NATIVE RANGE

Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Malta, Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Israel, Palestinian Territories, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria.