herpy

GECKOS

African fat-tailed gecko

Hemitheconyx caudicinctus

A quiet, ground-dwelling gecko from the savannas of West Africa with a thick, cone-shaped tail that works as a packed lunch. It is related to *Eublepharis macularius* and looks very like it, but wants it a little more humid. It is easy to keep and a good first choice for anyone who wants a calm gecko that lives down on the floor.

Family: Eublepharidae Former name: *Stenodactylus caudi-cinctus; Psilodactylus caudicinctus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**18-23 cm** total length incl. tail
Weight	**40-75 g**
Lifespan	**15-20 years**
Active	**At dusk and at night**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Savanna and dry forest**
Difficulty	**Beginner**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 30 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**25-28 °C**
Basking spot	**30-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-24 °C**
Humidity	**40-70%**
UVB	**Optional** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**8-12 months**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Clutches per year	**3-5**
Incubation	**43-70 days** at 28-32 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

A single adult gecko needs an enclosure of at least 60 × 30 × 30 cm (length × width × height), and larger is always better. It is the floor area that counts, because the species lives on the ground.

TEMPERATURE

Give the gecko a clear temperature gradient from one end to the other. The cool end should hold 25-28 °C, and the warm spot 30-32 °C measured on the surface. At night the temperature may fall to 20-24 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

The species comes from dry regions, but should not be kept completely dry. Keep humidity in the enclosure at 40-60 %, and let it rise towards 70 % for periods, while the damp hide is always damp.

LIGHTING AND UVB

The gecko is active at dusk and at night and manages without UVB when it gets vitamin D3 through supplements. A weak UVB light can nevertheless be an advantage, because it imitates nature and can strengthen calcium metabolism.

FEEDING

Hemitheconyx caudicinctus lives on insects. The staple diet is crickets, dubia roaches and the like, which have been fed well for a couple of days before being passed on.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Hemitheconyx caudicinctus is calm and easy to hold. It sleeps by day in a hide, so handle it in the evening, and give it a week or two to settle in before you pick it up.

NATIVE RANGE

Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon.