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GECKOS

Wahlberg's Velvet Gecko

Homopholis wahlbergii

Homopholis wahlbergii is a large, powerfully built, nocturnal gecko from southern Africa with velvety grey skin and strong toe pads. It reaches 14-21 cm and lives in bushveld and savanna, where it hides under bark, in rock crevices and on walls. Almost no husbandry experience exists, so this guide is based on the climate of its range and on a close relative.

Family: Gekkonidae Former name: *Homopholis walbergii; Platypholis walbergii*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**14-21 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**10-15 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal and rock-dwelling**
Habitat	**Savanna and dry forest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 45 × 60 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-28 °C**
Basking spot	**30-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-23 °C**
Humidity	**50-70%**
UVB	**Optional**
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**2 eggs**
Incubation	**60-90 days** at 27-29 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Little is known about keeping *Homopholis wahlbergii* in captivity.
TEMPERATURE	By day the temperature should be 24-28 °C, and 30-32 °C under a heat lamp or on a basking spot. At night it falls to 20-23 °C. The temperature should drop every night. Avoid heat above 32 °C.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity should be 50-70 %, with a damper end by the water bowl and a drier one at the other end. Mist the enclosure every evening so the animal has a little dew, and let the substrate dry out again during the day.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is nocturnal and does not need strong light, but 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness mimic its range.
FEEDING	The species eats insects. In the wild these are mainly beetles and moths, but also termites, grasshoppers, caterpillars and millipedes, and large animals take large prey.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The animals hide by day and are strong enough to bite if they feel threatened. They should not be handled unless necessary.
NATIVE RANGE	South Africa, Eswatini and Mozambique.