herpy

GECKOS

Northern velvet gecko

Oedura castelnaui

Oedura castelnaui is a flattened, nocturnal climber from open woodland and savanna in northern Queensland, especially on the Cape York Peninsula. It lives hidden by day and comes out when darkness falls. Care and breeding are largely based on experience with other species in the genus.

Family: Diplodactylidae Former name: *Phyllodactylus castelnaui; Oedura mayeri*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**15-20 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**10-15 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Savanna**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**45 × 45 × 60 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-28 °C**
Basking spot	**30-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-24 °C**
Humidity	**40-70%**
UVB	**Optional** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Incubation	**60-75 days** at 26-29 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

A single adult *Oedura castelnaui* needs a tall enclosure of at least 45 × 45 × 60 cm (length × width × height). A pair needs somewhat more, for example 60 × 45 × 60 cm.

TEMPERATURE

Keep the daytime temperature at 24-28 °C and let a small area reach 30-32 °C, for example under a low lamp or a heat mat on the side. At night the temperature may fall to 20-24 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Keep the air at around 40-60 % with a brief rise to nearly 70 % after misting in the evening. Let the enclosure dry out during the day. Always put a shallow bowl of fresh water in the enclosure, and change it every day.

LIGHTING AND UVB

Oedura castelnaui is nocturnal, and UVB is not essential. A weak UVB light is nevertheless a reasonable choice, as long as there is also shade.

FEEDING

Oedura castelnaui lives on insects. Give live feeder insects of a suitable size: crickets, dubia roaches, grasshoppers and now and then mealworms or waxworms.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Like other *Oedura* species, *Oedura castelnaui* is probably calm, but secretive and quick, and it wriggles free fast if you grab it. Do not pick it up more often than necessary.

NATIVE RANGE

Australia.