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GECKOS

Madagascar ground gecko

Paroedura picta

A small, compact ground gecko from the dry south-west of Madagascar with mottled markings, a large head and an alert gaze. It is robust, breeds readily and takes up so little space that it is a good choice for anyone starting out with geckos.

Family: Gekkonidae Former name: *Paroedura pictus; Diplodactylus pictus; Phyllodactylus pictus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**12-18 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**8-10 years**
Active	**At dusk and at night**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Dry forest**
Difficulty	**Beginner**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**40 × 30 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-28 °C**
Basking spot	**29-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-24 °C**
Humidity	**50-70%**
UVB	**Optional**
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**9-12 months**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Incubation	**40-65 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 animal needs an enclosure of at least 40 × 30 × 30 cm (length × width × height), and bigger is better. A male with two or three females needs at least 60 × 40 × 40 cm.
TEMPERATURE	By day there should be 24-28 °C in the enclosure and a warm spot on one side at 29-32 °C, so that the animal can choose for itself.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity should be moderate, about 50-70 %. Mist lightly every day or every other day, so that part of the substrate is damp and the rest dry.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is active at dusk and at night and manages without UVB when it is given vitamin D3 as a supplement.
FEEDING	The gecko lives on insects. The staple is crickets and dubia roaches, and for variety you can offer locusts, mealworms and other small insects.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Paroedura picta* is calm and curious and gets used to being handled, but it is an animal to watch, not to pick up every day. It can run fast and jump, so hold it low, preferably sitting on the floor.
NATIVE RANGE	Madagascar.