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GECKOS

Koch's giant day gecko

Phelsuma kochi

Phelsuma kochi is a large, green day gecko from the dry forests of north-western Madagascar. It is slightly smaller than the better-known *Phelsuma grandis* and is cared for in the same way, but lives in a drier climate. It is diurnal, needs UVB and a warm basking spot, and is an animal to observe rather than handle.

Family: Gekkonidae Former name: *Phelsuma madagascariensis kochi*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**20-24 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**8-15 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Dry forest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 60 × 120 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**26-30 °C**
Basking spot	**32-35 °C**
Temperature, night	**22-25 °C**
Humidity	**50-70%**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects, fruit, nectar and complete diet**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**12-14 months**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Incubation	**48-80 days** at 27-29 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

Little is known about the care of *Phelsuma kochi*, so the figures in this guide are borrowed from the close relative *Phelsuma grandis*. A single gecko needs a tall enclosure of at least 60 × 60 × 120 cm (length × width × height).

TEMPERATURE

By day the temperature in the enclosure should be 26-30 °C, and the basking spot should be 32-35 °C. At night it should fall to 22-25 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Humidity should be 50-70 %, measured in the middle of the enclosure, and it may well fall during the day. *Phelsuma kochi* comes from a dry area and does not tolerate constantly saturated air.

LIGHTING AND UVB

Phelsuma kochi is diurnal and needs UVB. Use a T5 tube of a strength and at a distance that gives a UV index of 3-4 at the uppermost perches (Ferguson zone 3), and preferably measure with a UV index meter.

FEEDING

Phelsuma kochi eats both insects and sweet foods.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Phelsuma kochi is shy and fast and poorly suited to handling. The skin is thin and can be torn if the animal is grabbed, so let it walk voluntarily onto a hand instead of taking hold of it.

NATIVE RANGE

Madagascar.