herpy

GECKOS

Lesser rough-snouted gecko

Rhacodactylus trachycephalus

Rhacodactylus trachycephalus is a rare, nocturnal climber from the Isle of Pines and the small island of Môrô in New Caledonia, and it gives birth to live young. The species is critically endangered in the wild and rare in captivity. Its care resembles that of the other *Rhacodactylus* species, but the animals are expensive, grow slowly and have at most two young a year.

Family: Diplodactylidae Former name: *Chameleonurus trachycephalus; Rhacodactylus trachyrhynchus trachycephalus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**10-14 cm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**15-20 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Rainforest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**45 × 45 × 90 cm** L × W × H for 4 adults
Temperature, day	**22-26 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-21 °C**
Humidity	**65-70%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Optional**
Diet	**Insects and complete diet**
Kept	**In pairs or in groups**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Live-bearing**
Sexually mature	**36-60 months**
Litter size	**1-2 young**
Clutches per year	**1**
Gestation	**180 days**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Not listed**
EU annex	**Not listed**
IUCN	**Critically Endangered (CR)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE
The species thrives best in a vertical enclosure of at least 45 × 45 × 90 cm (length × width × height). It holds one to four animals, and a larger enclosure is always an advantage.

TEMPERATURE
During the day *Rhacodactylus trachycephalus* needs 22-26 °C, and at night the temperature may fall to 18-21 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER
Humidity should be around 65-70 %. It can be maintained with a live plant, moist sphagnum in a hide and regular spraying. Spray three to four times a week, as with the related, larger *Rhacodactylus* species.

LIGHTING AND UVB
The species is entirely nocturnal and only comes out when it is dark. It has not been shown that UVB is necessary, but all *Rhacodactylus* species probably bask a little in the wild.

FEEDING
The diet consists of live insects and a dry pollen and nectar food for day geckos, which is available all the time. Give four adult crickets per adult once a week.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING
The species is calm, and with regular handling the animals become tame and just as easy to pick up as *Correlophus ciliatus*. The animals are active at night, so handle them in the evening.

NATIVE RANGE
New Caledonia.