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GECKOS

Common Namib Day Gecko

Rhoptropus afer

A small, lightning-fast rock gecko from the Namib Desert, one of the few geckos that is active by day. It has long legs, yellow markings on the throat and the underside of the tail, and feeds on ants and beetles. Almost no husbandry experience exists, so the species is only for the most experienced keepers.

Family: Gekkonidae Former name: *Rhoptropus braconnieri*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**3-5 cm** snout-vent length
Weight	**2-3.5 g**
Lifespan	**5-8 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Rock-dwelling and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Desert and rocky terrain**
Difficulty	**Expert**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 40 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**26-30 °C**
Basking spot	**33-35 °C**
Temperature, night	**16-20 °C**
Humidity	**25-45%**
Water	**No water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects and small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Incubation	**56-75 days** at 30 °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 the care of *Rhoptropus afer*.
TEMPERATURE	By day the enclosure should be 26-30 °C, and the basking spot on a flat stone may reach 33-35 °C. At night the temperature should fall to 16-20 °C.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity should be low, around 25-45%. The enclosure should be dry, and the substrate must not become wet.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is active by day in open, sunlit terrain, so it needs strong light and UVB.
FEEDING	In the wild the species eats mostly ants and beetles. Give small live insects daily to juveniles and every other day to adults: fruit flies, springtails, newly hatched crickets and small mealworms.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Rhoptropus afer* is fast and shy and should not be handled. It is not an animal to pick up, and a single wrong grip can injure such a small gecko. It uses its tail as a signal and shows the yellow underside to other geckos.
NATIVE RANGE	Namibia and Angola.