herpy

GECKOS

Ashy gecko

Sphaerodactylus elegans

One of the largest species among the dwarf geckos, yet still only 7-8 cm long. *Sphaerodactylus elegans* is diurnal, climbs on glass and changes appearance as it grows: the young have black crossbands on a yellow body and an orange tail, while the adults are a subdued reddish brown with a fine pattern of pale dots.

Family: Sphaerodactylidae Former name: *Sphaerodactylus alopex; Sphaerodactylus punctatissimus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**7-8 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**10-20 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Rainforest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**30 × 30 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**24-28 °C**
Basking spot	**29-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-22 °C**
Humidity	**60-70%**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Insects and small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**1 eggs**
Incubation	**80-90 days** at 24-28 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	A pair needs an enclosure of at least 30 × 30 × 30 cm (length × width × height).
TEMPERATURE	By day the temperature should be 24-28 °C with a small warm spot of 29-32 °C under a weak bulb with a thermostat. The cool side must not exceed 28 °C, so choose a low-wattage heat source.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	The species needs more moisture than many other dwarf geckos. The humidity should be about 60-70 %. Spray the enclosure once or twice a day so that there are water droplets on leaves and panes for the gecko to drink.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The gecko is diurnal and benefits from plenty of light. Keep the light on for about 12 hours a day, preferably a little shorter in winter. If there are live plants, an LED plant lamp is also needed.
FEEDING	The gecko is an insectivore. Small animals mean small prey: young need newly hatched crickets, fruit flies (*Drosophila melanogaster*), springtails and small woodlice.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The species is best kept singly or as a pair. Males must never be put together, because they fight.
NATIVE RANGE	Cuba, Haiti and Dominican Republic.