herpy

GECKOS

Common house gecko

Hemidactylus frenatus

Hemidactylus frenatus is a sturdy, nocturnal gecko from South and Southeast Asia, which has followed ships and cargo out across the tropics and today lives in houses in large parts of the world. It climbs vertical surfaces, hunts insects under lamps and calls with a loud, ticking chatter. It is rare in captivity and is best known as an invasive species.

Family: Gekkonidae Former name: *Hemidactylus vittatus; Hemidactylus okinawensis* Published 15 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**8-15 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**5-8 years**
Active	**At dusk and at night**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal and rock-dwelling**
Habitat	**Rainforest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**40 × 30 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**25-30 °C**
Basking spot	**30-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**22-25 °C**
Humidity	**50-70%**
UVB	**Optional**
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**6-12 months**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Incubation	**46-62 days** at 28-30 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Not listed**
EU annex	**Not listed**
IUCN	**Not Evaluated (NE)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

Hemidactylus frenatus is rarely described in captivity, so the recommendations here are an assessment based on its way of life and on other small, climbing geckos.

TEMPERATURE

There are no good, publicly available temperature figures from captivity, so the figures here are based on the species' way of life and on the fact that it regulates its own body temperature at 26-35 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Keep a humidity of about 50-70 %, and mist the enclosure lightly once a day, preferably in the evening, so that there is dew on leaves and stones. The humidity should be able to fall during the day.

LIGHTING AND UVB

Hemidactylus frenatus is active at dusk and at night, and there is no documented UVB recommendation.

FEEDING

In the wild *Hemidactylus frenatus* is a versatile hunter. Insects and spiders make up most of the diet: cockroaches, termites, flies, moths, beetles, bees and wasps.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Hemidactylus frenatus is fast, nervous and should not be handled. It can bite if it is stressed, but the bite is rather weak and harmless to humans.

NATIVE RANGE

India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Philippines.

The full guide with map and updates: herpy.org/gekkoer/hemidactylus-frenatus