herpy

GECKOS

White-headed dwarf gecko

Lygodactylus picturatus

Lygodactylus picturatus is a small, diurnal climber from the coastal forests of East Africa, where the male has a bright yellow head on a blue-grey body. It grows to only 7-9 cm including the tail, but is curious and active and can be kept in pairs in a small, densely planted enclosure.

Family: Gekkonidae Former name: *Hemidactylus picturatus; Lygodactylus luteopicturatus* Published 16 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**7-9 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**5-10 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Rainforest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**30 × 30 × 45 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**25-30 °C**
Basking spot	**30-35 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-22 °C**
Humidity	**50-75%**
Water	**No water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Insects, fruit, complete diet and small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**In pairs or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**9-15 months**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Incubation	**60-120 days** at 24-27 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE
A pair of *Lygodactylus picturatus* can be kept in an enclosure of at least 30 × 30 × 45 cm (length × width × height), and bigger is better.

TEMPERATURE
Lygodactylus picturatus is a heat-loving day animal, and the enclosure must have a distinct temperature gradient. By day the background temperature should be 25-30 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER
For *Lygodactylus picturatus*, keep the humidity at about 50-60 % by day and 60-75 % at night.

LIGHTING AND UVB
Lygodactylus picturatus is diurnal and needs strong, even light. Use fluorescent tubes, preferably T5, and combine a UVB tube with a daylight tube, so the enclosure is bright and the animals show their colours and behaviour.

FEEDING
Lygodactylus picturatus needs live small prey as its staple diet: small crickets, fruit flies, bean beetles, waxworm larvae, small grasshoppers, aphids, small roaches, small isopods and springtails.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING
Lygodactylus picturatus is a small and fast species that is not suited to handling. It is fast and can easily get away or be injured, and the tail can be dropped.

NATIVE RANGE
Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique.