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GECKOS

Morocco lizard-fingered gecko

Saurodactylus mauritanicus

Saurodactylus mauritanicus is a very small, ground-dwelling gecko from north-eastern Morocco and north-western Algeria. The body measures only about 3 cm from snout to vent, it is active during the day and at dusk, and the female lays one egg at a time. Almost nothing is known about keeping it, so the guide is based on the climate of its range.

Family: Sphaerodactylidae Former name: *Gymnodactylus mauritanicus; Saurodactylus desertorum* Published 16 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**3 cm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**5-10 years**
Active	**By day and at dusk**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Semi-desert and rocky terrain**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**40 × 30 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**22-28 °C**
Basking spot	**30-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**12-18 °C**
Humidity	**40-60%**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Insects and small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**1 eggs**
Incubation	**60-90 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
Almost nothing is known about keeping *Saurodactylus mauritanicus*. The climate in its range is Mediterranean, with hot, dry summers and mild, damper winters, and the species is a very small, ground-dwelling gecko.

TEMPERATURE
During the day the substrate is kept at 22-28 °C with a small warm spot of 30-32 °C under a weak spotlight controlled by a thermostat. At night the temperature falls to 12-18 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER
Humidity in the habitats is not documented; 40-60 % fits the climate.

LIGHTING AND UVB
Saurodactylus mauritanicus is active during the day and at dusk.

FEEDING
In the wild the species lives on small arthropods. The feeder animals must be very small, no larger than the animal's head: springtails, fruit flies, newly hatched crickets and small woodlice.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING
The species hunts as a sit-and-wait predator: it sits still and strikes when a small insect passes by. Behaviour in captivity is not documented. Keep the animal singly or a pair in a roomy enclosure with many hides.

NATIVE RANGE
Morocco and Algeria.