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CHAMELEONS

Plated Leaf Chameleon

Brookesia stumpffi

Brookesia stumpffi is a small, leaf-like chameleon from the forest floor of northern and north-western Madagascar. It reaches up to about 9 cm, has a row of spines along each side of the back and changes colour only slightly. It lays 2-5 eggs and can be kept in pairs. It requires high humidity, a thick layer of leaf litter and very small feeder insects for the young.

Family: Chamaeleonidae Published 16 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**7-9 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**3-4 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Dry forest and rainforest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**40 × 30 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**22-25 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-20 °C**
Humidity	**70-100%**
Water	**No water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Insects and small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**In pairs or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**5 months**
Clutch size	**2-5 eggs**
Incubation	**45-70 days** at 18-23 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

A pair needs an enclosure of at least 40 × 30 × 40 cm (length × width × height). The size is an estimate based on the size of the animal, and larger is an advantage, especially if there are several females.

TEMPERATURE

The daytime temperature is 22-25 °C, and at night 18-20 °C is suitable. This corresponds to the climate in the leaf litter in the range. The species does not need a warm basking spot, and a weak heat source at one end is enough.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Humidity should be 70-100 %, so that it stays high in the leaf litter around the clock. Mist the enclosure 1-2 times a day so that the leaves and plants are damp, but so that the surfaces are dry again before the next misting.

LIGHTING AND UVB

The species is diurnal. A weak UVB light corresponding to Ferguson zone 1 is enough, and the animal must always be able to withdraw into shade.

FEEDING

Brookesia stumpffi eats small insects such as crickets, fruit flies, cockroaches, waxworms and small grasshoppers. The feeder insects must be small, and the young are fed springtails, fruit flies and newly hatched crickets.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

B. stumpffi is calm and diurnal and walks slowly around in the leaves. When threatened it lets itself fall and lies still like a dead leaf. This is a natural defensive behaviour and not a sign of illness.

NATIVE RANGE

Madagascar.