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CHAMELEONS

Carpet chameleon

Furcifer lateralis

Furcifer lateralis is a small, colourful chameleon from the forests, scrub and gardens of Madagascar. The female is especially strongly patterned, particularly when gravid. The species reaches only 17-25 cm, matures in a few months and lives only 2-3 years, and its modest size makes it a manageable chameleon for the experienced keeper.

Family: Chamaeleonidae English name: Carpet Chameleon Former name: *Chamaeleo lateralis; Chamaeleo lambertoni* Published 16 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**17-25 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**2-3 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Savanna and rainforest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**45 × 45 × 60 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-29 °C**
Basking spot	**32-35 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-22 °C**
Humidity	**60-100%**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**3-6 months**
Clutch size	**6-23 eggs**
Clutches per year	**3-6**
Incubation	**150-400 days** at 20-25 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	An adult needs an enclosure of at least 45 × 45 × 60 cm (length × width × height).
TEMPERATURE	The daytime temperature should be 24-29 °C. Use a basking spot of 32-35 °C, measured as surface temperature with an IR thermometer, and let the upper part of the enclosure be at 27-29 °C and shaded spots and the bottom at 21-24 °C.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity should be 60-100 %. The enclosure may dry out during the day, as long as the air is relatively humid and the animal can drink daily.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is diurnal and sun-loving, so it requires strong light and UVB. Use a 6500 K T5 HO tube for light and a UVB tube that gives Ferguson zone 3 at the basking spot.
FEEDING	*F. lateralis* is a pure insectivore. The prey should be about as long as the distance between the eyes; mealworms may be longer. Vary the food: crickets, mealworms, superworms, roaches, fruit flies and bean beetles.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The species is kept singly. Males are aggressive and territorial, and females stress easily. The animals can bite each other, so mating must be supervised, and the animals separated when mating is over.
NATIVE RANGE	Madagascar.