

Prehistoric Pets Care Sheet

Veiled Chameleons

(*Chamaeleo calyptrotus*)

General Information

Veiled Chameleons are found in Saudi Arabia and Yemen along the coast of the Red Sea. Their habitat includes coastal plains, mountain slopes, and high plateaus. Veiled Chameleons reach adulthood quickly and males are noticeably larger than females. Adult males can reach 15-24 inches in total length, while females range from 10-13 inches. Sexing adults is easy, males have a larger cranial fin and have a large scale or spur on the back foot. Babies can be sexed by looking for this enlarged scale. Adult male Veiled chameleons are territorial and will not tolerate the presence of other males. In general it's best to keep both sexes separate from each other unless you are attempting to breed them. Once a female is sexually mature she can lay 25-75 eggs 3-4 times each year. Female Veiled chameleons can also store sperm many months after a successful mating and produce viable eggs. After a successful breeding and egg laying, you can expect the eggs to hatch within 190 days.

Temperature and UV Lighting

Veiled Chameleons love heat and require temperatures under the heat light to range from 90-105 degrees and night time temperatures can range from 70-75 degrees. Proper temperature allows Veiled Chameleons to properly digest food and allows the immune system to function normally. Veiled Chameleons require 12-14 hours a day of UVB light. This light enables the chameleon to produce vitamin D3. The vitamin D3 produced by UVB metabolizes the calcium in the lizards' diet. In general it's what makes a chameleons' bones hard and without it they usually die. This process of inadequate UVB and calcium is called Metabolic Bone Disease. Also it is very important to change your UVB light every 6-8 months, after this time the light stops producing adequate UVB. If you're not sure if your UV light is still producing UVB, bring it in and we'll be happy to test the light for you.

Calcium

Veiled chameleons also require a calcium and vitamin supplement. This supplement works with the UVB light allowing the lizard to receive the proper amounts of calcium and vitamins. This should be used every day as babies and reduced to 1-2 times a week as adults. Calcium is sold in a powder form and is sprinkled on the insects that you feed your chameleon. You should apply a very light coating to the food items, being careful not to waste any excess powder.

Housing

Veiled Chameleons require a cage that has a lot of climbing room and require more ventilation than most reptiles. Baby chameleons can be housed in a 10 gallon terrarium or in a screen cage such as ESUs' Fresh Air Habitat. Adult Veiled chameleons should be housed in a cage with at least two sides screen and measuring 36" tall and 18" x 18" of floor space.

Food and Water

Veiled chameleons should be fed appropriate sized crickets, mealworms, waxworms, and superworms. A mixed diet of these food items, five to seven times per week, is ideal and will ensure proper growth and health. Chameleons do not usually drink standing water and prefer to drink droplets of water off themselves or vegetation. We recommend that you mist baby Veiled chameleons twice a day and adults can be misted once each day.

Cleaning and Handling

The terrarium should be cleaned as necessary. Any fecal matter or left over food should be cleaned out several times a week. The bedding should be completely changed once a month. The inside of the terrarium can be cleaned out with an appropriate reptile cage cleaner, we recommend Natural Chemistry's Healthy Habitat. Veiled chameleons can be handled on a daily basis and usually tame down quite well. Babies should be handled as little as possible during the first month to allow them to completely adjust to their new surroundings. Always wash your hands before and after handling them.



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