



Day Geckos *Phelsuma species*

- Day Geckos are indigenous to the tropical rainforests and woodlands of Madagascar and surrounding islands with about 70 known species.
- Unlike most geckos, day geckos are primarily a diurnal species (active during the day) and lack eye lids, using their tongues instead for eye cleaning.
- Small to large geckos that can be variable in color and appearance depending on species, but most have vibrant green, blue, red, or orange coloration, and well defined toe pads.
- If provided the proper care, day geckos can attain longevity of 8-12 years or more.

Size

Ranges from 2 ½ -12 inches depending on the species.

Housing

Housing must be sealed and escape proof. Depending on the size and species, a 5 to 20 gallon tall or equivalent sized arboreal screen or glass enclosure is needed for these geckos. Substrate for day geckos can include peat moss or soil, coconut fiber, or most types of commercially available bark substrate. These geckos do best in a naturalistic enclosure with live or artificial plants, rocks, branches, or logs for ample basking and hiding opportunities. Live plants can also help maintain adequate levels of humidity and moisture that these geckos require.

Day geckos are primarily diurnal, and will also require the proper UVB lighting and a thermal gradient and regular misting in the enclosure. Create a thermal gradient (or a warm side) in the cage/enclosure with an appropriate incandescent bulb for a basking area of around 90-95 degrees F and a cooler area of around 80-86 degrees F. Nighttime temperatures can be permitted to drop to around 75 degrees F. Access to natural sunlight, although not required, is also beneficial for these geckos.

Spot clean the enclosure for urates, feces, or uneaten food at least twice per week. Be sure to periodically replace the substrate, clean, and disinfect the enclosure and its furnishings at minimum every 2-3 months.

Feeding/Diet

In the wild, day geckos are insectivorous and frugivorous, meaning they eat insects and other invertebrates as well as fruit and vegetable matter as well as honey and nectar.

In captivity, feed day geckos appropriate sized crickets, mealworms, superworms, roaches, and waxworms. Gut load these prey items, and provide calcium and vitamin D3 supplements by feeding them commercially available diets for added nutritional value. Many nutritional commercial diets for day geckos and similar species can also be used 2-3 times weekly.

Handling

Most day geckos will not tolerate frequent handling, and have soft, delicate skin that can easily be torn or injured, and therefore, handling should be kept to a minimum. These geckos are better left viewed rather than handled.

Also be sure to practice basic cleanliness and hygiene associated with proper husbandry after touching or handling any animals or animal enclosures to prevent the possibility of contracting salmonellosis or any other zoonotic pathogens