



Gargoyle Gecko *Rhacodactylus auriculatus*

- The gargoyle gecko is named for its cranial knobs and projections above the eyes and nose that give them their name.
- Gargoyle geckos are native to New Caledonia north east of Australia.
- Once thought to be extinct in the wild, they were re discovered in 1994.
- Small to medium sized gecko with small, distinctive knobs and projections on the head. Ranges in color from shades of tan, gray, brown, reddish, orange, or yellowish sometimes with spots, stripes, or dashes. Has a long, thin prehensile tail.
- If provided the proper care, gargoyle geckos can attain longevity of 10-12 years or more.

Size

Ranges from 8-9" as adults.

Housing

Housing must be sealed and escape proof. Provide a 10-15 gallon terrarium or enclosure for hatchling and juvenile gargoyle geckos. House adults in 20-30 gallon tall glass or screen enclosure. Gargoyle geckos can be maintained on newspaper, paper towel, peat moss, or coco fiber. Provide ample artificial foliage, driftwood, rocks, or logs for ample basking, climbing, and hiding opportunities. For moisture, provide a small bowl or dish of fresh water 2-3 times per week and mist once to twice weekly.

Ideal temperatures for gargoyle geckos range from 72-80 degrees F room temperature. Do not keep them at over 85 degrees F or below 65 degrees F. Provide a daily photoperiod or light cycle of at least 12 hours. No additional UVA/UVB lighting is required 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, gargoyle geckos are omnivorous, meaning they eat insects and various fruits.

In captivity, many commercially available crested gecko diets are available that contain most, if not all essential proteins, vitamins, and minerals needed. Insects such as crickets and roaches, can also be offered but should not be larger than snout to eye on the gecko. Feed geckos 2-3 times weekly. Gutload feeder insects by feeding them quality diets, and dust them with calcium and vitamin D3 for added nutritional value. Offer food in a small dish or pan.

Handling

Gargoyle geckos generally tolerate moderate levels of handling even as hatchlings. Handle them gently and deliberately but do not drop or injure the animal. Take care to not grab your gecko by its tail or it may detach if your gecko perceives you as a predator or a threat. Most adult gargoyle geckos will settle down considerably and become quite docile and easily handled. Allow them to walk or jump from hand to hand.

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