



## Veiled Chameleon *Chamaeleo calyptratus*

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- The veiled chameleon is found in mountainous regions of Saudi Arabia and other areas of the Middle East.
- The veiled chameleon is characterized by its green base color with brownish, reddish-orange, or bluish stripes, and a large distinct vertical crest.
- Chameleons will change color depending on their health, current mood, and overall temperatures.
- Chameleons are specialized tree dwellers, and have prehensile tails and “zygodactyl” feet for gripping and climbing.
- Eyes can function and rotate independently of one another.
- If provided the proper care, veiled chameleons can attain longevity of 4-8 years on average.

### **Size**

Adult Veiled chameleons range in size from 12” to 18” on average. Some males will reach up to 24”.

### **Housing**

Housing must be sealed, well ventilated, and escape proof. Provide a minimum of a 2’ X 2’ X 3’ fully screened tall enclosure for adults. Provide ample artificial foliage, driftwood, rocks, vines, branches or logs for ample basking, climbing, and hiding opportunities. Substrate is optional, but substrates such as cypress mulch, sphagnum moss, or coconut fiber can be used. Veiled chameleons do not recognize standing water in a water bowl; instead mist them at least twice daily for moisture and hydration.

Provide a lighting and temperature gradient for veiled chameleons from 80 degrees F to 96 degrees F. Use an infrared night time bulb to create nighttime temperature gradients of 75 to 85 degrees F. Use florescent, broad spectrum, and UVB lighting for optimal health of veiled chameleons.

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 captivity, feed veiled chameleons a varied insect/invertebrate diet of crickets, mealworms, wax worms, and even earthworms. Veileds will occasionally eat green leaf vegetables as well. Feed veiled chameleons 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 or by hand.

### **Handling**

Veiled chameleons will generally not tolerate frequent handling, and it should be kept to low levels. Should a chameleon be handled, it is important to remember to not forcefully pick up the animal, which may lead to further stress and/or injury. Allow a chameleon to walk onto your hands or gently coax them to do so if possible. Generally, chameleons are better suited as display animals.

\*\*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\*\*