



“Chameleon Care Guide”

Supply Checklist:

- Temp gun
- Sticks for horizontal (perching) branch's & vertical (pathways)
- Uvb t5 6.0 bulb
- 50-60 watt heat bulb
- Enclosure with proper ventilation
- Spray bottle and water dripper or misting system

HOUSING

Please always keep only one Chameleon per enclosure. Cohabitation is not appropriate for almost all species of reptiles, especially “Furcifer Pardalis” A.K.A. Panther Chameleons.

Forever home size: 2” x 2” x 4 “

Even bigger is always better

You have a few options here with the type of enclosure that you could choose to go with.

Well Ventilated Glass Enclosures:

If you choose to go this route make sure you outfit the top of the enclosure with a computer fan and drill extra ventilation holes. I don't find aquariums “unless severely modified” appropriate however exoterra makes glass enclosures with plenty of ventilation and height to fit the needs of these arboreal creatures. I would still add a cheap computer fan. (Just run here and there for a few minutes, don't run constantly!

Hybrid Enclosures:

Hybrid closures are the best way to go. A hybrid enclosure is an enclosure that has been modified. Typically you will see the screen enclosures that are available for the chameleons on the market with different solutions keepers have come up with (shower curtain, vinyl wrap, and my personal favorite Corrugated plastic) To allow your habitat to maintain proper humidity levels.

Screen Enclosures:

There are some regions in which screen enclosures, especially referring to Florida when keeping Chameleons outside, are appropriate. However where we are located in Kentucky and in most places you really won't be able to maintain the proper humidity levels your chameleons require. With an all open air enclosure. This is something to think about when choosing the type of enclosure that will house your little friend. Don't panic if you have already got yourself a reptibreeze, get yourself some corrugated plastic and simply drill it into the metal frame of the enclosure covering the sides and the back. This will also create a more contained environment if you have multiple Reptiles. Doing things this way will be very beneficial in avoiding all types of cross-contamination.

Also always be sure you are washing your hands with warm soapy water and drying completely in between handling different animals.

Regardless of the type of enclosure that you choose You should get yourself a thermometer/hygrometer with a probe that you can stick down into your enclosure, placing the heat probe on the Basking Point.

You will have to decide if you would like to keep the bottom of the cage bare and add a paper towel to create an easier situation for you to keep things clean and tidy which is one thing this species highly requires and a good route to go if you have multiple reptiles. You want to swiftly remove the waste product the moment that you notice it. Wipe the bottom of the enclosure with Chlorhexidine or white vinegar and replace the paper towel. The best way to deal with all the water that's going to build up in your terrarium is to place your Chameleon habitat on a bakers rack with either the lid to a plastic tote, vinyl, rack liners, or implementing a gutter system.

You could also choose to go with a bioactive set up. This means that you set up a natural ecosystem in which your chameleons become a part of. This will be inhabited by a cleanup crew of insects (TROPICAL springtails and isopods) that you add into the soil to help make your job easier. Those insects turn the waste product from the Chamaeleon into viable nutrients for the soil that you set up specific for this tropical species to naturally feed the plants to everything thriving as one before your eyes behind the glass as one harmonious circle of life.

Research how to build your own soil that is appropriate for her Chameleons tropical species. You also want to research how to form a drainage layer with like a leca or pebbles so that way you don't flood your soil and create a swampy situation. So that your soil doesn't run into your

drainage layer you can put a screen in between the clay bowls/pebbles or you can use a weed barrier from your local department store. Depending on the type of enclosure that you choose you could also drill a hole in the bottom love you enclosure that way in case your drainage system ever gets backed up you could drain with ease. Simply attach a bulkhead to the hole that you drill.

LIVE PLANTS

Some plants that you can include in your terrarium that we have had great success with is our umbrella plants, pothos, bromeliads, and carnivorous plants. You can find a more extensive list on Neptune the chameleons YouTube channel or the Chamaeleon academy. You can also find chameleon safe plant postings in the "Chamaeleon forums." As long as you have good drainage of your soil these plants should thrive for you inside the tropical conditions That you create and create plenty of fresh air for your friend to breathe. This helps reduce the risk of issues like "RI's"

Make sure to replace any soil with organic soil or make your own tropical soil. Also cover the soil with stones that are obviously too big for the Chamaeleon to ingest by examining them.

HYDRATION

Day Time 50%-60%

also have a point midday in which you allow everything to fully dry out. Run a fan indirectly (bounce off a wall etc) replace the wet paper towel after your morning misting or dripping. Even better, run a dehumidifier for an hour or so.

Night Time 75 to 100%.

You will want to mist your chameleon's cage 30 minutes before the lights go out. You will also want to mist them in the morning and we like to run a humidifier to simulate morning fog. Chameleons absorb moisture in the air through their mouth's.

Hydration is one the most crucial steps in your Panther Chameleon care process. You will need to give your Chameleon access to moving water. This is the only type of water your Chamaeleon can recognize as a hydration source. Chameleons cannot drink out of a bowl even though yes A severely dehydrated Chameleon may have been caught on keepers cameras a couple times and toxicly passed around but this is not an appropriate way to provide your animal with a water source. You can achieve this however by poking a hole in a water bottle, using a dripper cup, or the best way to do this is to implement a Mist King into your care process. You will also want to be aware and make sure that the water is dripping onto leaves Chameleons need either live or plastic plants as silk plants are difficult for them to drink from

however if combined with these other types of plants they make an excellent addition to fill up your habitat with dense foliage. I like to go to Places like hobby lobby and Michaels but only when they have their sales on foliage this is way less expensive than the foliage that is sold targeted Reptiles.

Again I will say Mist king is really the way to go. It does all the work for you that way your chameleons never miss an opportunity to hydrate themselves And with some experimenting and tinkering you can automate your hydration and humidity levels pretty much Indefinitely. That way you don't sweat traveling and such. A chameleon can be fine in the wild missing meals so as long as you typically stay on top of things then they will be fine while you make short trips here and there. This however does not go for your chameleons, you cannot skip this if you do not have somebody to watch your Chamaeleon and by that I mean make sure that it has water you will not be able to go anywhere for more than a night. This is why Mist King Is worth the investment and they even make an inexpensive version that controls just one terrarium.

Always use dechlorinated water. Tap water is not safe for your chameleons in most situations. Some keepers choose to use aqua safe and they have had success with this product but we don't really like the idea of adding chemicals to our water so we have implemented a reverse osmosis system. Purified water works just fine. A Britta filter will never do you wrong as long as you make sure to change the filter within the suggested time window.

TEMPS

Daytime Ambient (room temp) 72-77 F

Nighttime 60-70F make sure to have a slight "Night drop"

Basking Point (85-90F) *Day Time Only*

You need to create a branch that is placed conveniently at the exact right parameters for your Chamaeleon to bask on during the day. You will want a light schedule of 12 hours on, during the day and absolutely no lights on for 12 hours of the night. If you create an environment in which is both humid and hot, bacteria will thrive and your Chameleon will suffer.

Check your Basking point regularly with a temp gun thermometer (the highest point the top of the animal reaches when perched on the basking branch. If you ignore this your Chamaeleon can suffer burns as it cannot sense that it is being burned by a basking point set too close or by a bulb that's wattage is too high. For younger more adventurous Chameleons it's safe to consider the top of the enclosure the basking point when you're taking temps with your temp gun.

You will want to create a temperature gradient inside your chameleon's habitat this way your little friend can Regulate its body temperature by moving to a warmer or cooler section of its home. Remember they're cold blooded creatures they cannot thermal regulate turn on low power like us they must physically move when too cold or too hot to adjust. The best way to do

this is to incorporate many horizontal branches and also branches that are vertical to allow your Chamaeleon to roam back-and-forth and up-and-down the different temperature gradients that you create.

LIGHTING

The most common cause for Chameleons perishing in captivity is improper uvb lighting and/or supplementation. If you don't skip steps and follow every part of the process word for word and in your own time get a clear understanding of these components combined with proper husbandry your chameleons can potentially thrive far longer than chameleons in the wild due to eliminating the risk of predators.

1. Heat bulb: This bulb is for basking. Chameleons Thermo regulate by basking under the sun or in this case a heat bulb. I recommend a 50 to 60 Watt "zoo med" WHITE basking bulb or incandescent normal house bulb NOT LED for basking.
2. The UVB bulb that is marketed to you and pet stores for Chameleons and as part of the "Chamaeleon kit" is insufficient and useless to the life of your Chamaeleon. Do not be fooled and never use these bulbs! You have two options that you can achieve successful Uv "Ferguson" zones with. I highly suggest an "Arcadia T5 6%." Note there is also a T8 version that is not the bulb that you want make sure you get the Arcadia T5 6%." You will need to get a lamp suited for the high output, the best option in my opinion is a sun blaster. Just make sure that the sun blaster you choose is going to fit the Arcadia bulb that you decide to go with. The other Bulb you could choose to go with is Reptisun 5.0 though you will get a longer life out of the Arcadia. Expect to have to replace these bulbs every year if using Arcadia about every six months if you're using the reptisun. A good tool to have at hand is a "solar meter 6.5r." This allows you to Get a reading on the UV levels to see if your lights are still admitting enough UVB and also confirm that your UVB Basking branch is not in the danger zone where Harmful levels of radiation could be transmitted well also making sure that it is in a sweet spot so that your animal can soak up enough of these vital to their health light waves.
3. 6500 k bulb. This bulb is for the chameleons requirement of white light and also to allow plants to thrive inside of your terrarium.

The uvb needs to be suspended 6 inches from the screen top of the enclosure. The chameleon needs a branch that is 6 inches under the top of the enclosure under this light that is separate from the basking point to be able to utilize uvb.

The basking bulb needs to be either suspended 3-6 inches off the top of the cage or you need to use a "deep dome" fixture.

The basking branch placement can be tintured with by using your temp gun but a good starting point is measuring where the top of your chameleon's body will be 5- 6 inches from the top of the enclosure when perched on this branch directly under the light. When checking basking temps to set the final placement make sure you are reading a leaf or a branch and not the chameleon's body as you will get improper readings.

SUPPLEMENTATION

While panther Chameleons Are strictly insectivores insects alone do not contain enough nutrients for them to prosper. To make up for what the insects lack, feed your insects items low in phosphorus and high in nutrients. We call this controlled feeding of appropriate vitamin rich foods to your prey insects, "gut loading."

You will want to choose veggies such as dark leafy greens and fruits from a chameleon safe food list. There are many food options which are toxic to chameleons. Always Check a trustworthy source before you go throwing things into your feeder bins.

Variety is something you always want to keep in mind don't just feed all carrots all the time to your insects and expects your Chamaeleon to thrive. You need to always feed a variety of dark leafy greens fruits and veggies to your feeder bugs and you also need to offer a variety of different feeder insects next to your staple "main diet item" which will be Dubia roaches and or crickets.

Here's a list of feeders you can offer your Chameleon:

We choose Dubia roaches, crickets, and black soldier fly larvae as our staple diet for a Chameleons with the suggested diet of variety. This means we can feed our friends all sorts of fun creepy crawlies.

!!=feeding these prey items anytime is perfectly fine combined with your staple feeder
!= feeding these prey are fantastic on occasions

- Black Soldier flies !!
- Horn worms *good as a tool if slightly dehydrated*
- Silkworms !!
- Wax worms
- Other roaches !!
- Mantis!! "smaller than the chameleon"
- Superworms "not many at once and not often"
- Blue bottle flies !!
- Silkmoth !
- Wax moth !
- Cicada ! "when in season & only collected from forest untouched by chemicals"

- Grasshoppers (technically not legal in the US so I'm not saying I suggest this so this is for my UK people) This is unfortunate because this makes up a large part of what was found in their diet during a study done in Madagascar.
- Stick insects (Indian walking sticks)

One of our personal favorites due to the high calcium content is black soldier fly larva. Praying mantis also make great feeders just be careful that the Mantis are smaller than the Chameleon they are being offered to.

Dusting Your Prey Items:

It is important that on top of gut loading you're bugs to also dust with calcium that has no D vitamin every single feeding. "Calcium carbonate" or "Arcadia earth pro A" are great.

Once a week I dust with a calcium that does include D and small trace amounts of multivitamin "Repashy Calcium plus" or "Repashy calcium plus LoD."

Once every two weeks you will also want to dust with a small amount of vitamin a. On this day, you do not want to include any other vitamins to your dusting's. Vitamin A is crucial but often neglected Requirement for your chameleons functionality. Often times when keepers are forgetting to dust with vitamin A Chameleons will start to develop eye issues. Be cautious and do not over dust with vitamin A as Chameleons can overdose on this vitamin supplement.

You will also want to include an appropriate phosphorus free multivitamin in your care regimen once every two weeks- a month.

Bee pollen is rich in viable antioxidants that chameleons greatly benefit from. We include organic bee pollen in every single dusting offered to our animals.

We choose to clean our enclosures with safe products including chlorhexidine solution diluted in water or plain old straight up white vinegar. We also steam clean every habitat every two weeks to ensure a safe environment for all of our animals free of microscopic Bacteria. Make sure that if you choose to steam clean that you remove your animal from us and close your first as you will burn it.

Gutload Foods: (always choose organic and be sure to give it a good wash and dry before offering to your feeder insects.)

- Carrots
- Kale

- Squash “yellow, butternut, acorn, zucchini, spaghetti
- Bananas
- Dandelion greens
- Peaches
- Mangos
- Blueberries
- Apples
- Sweet potatoes
- Papaya
- Seaweed squares
- Been pollen
- Flax seed
- Sesame seed
- Alfalfa

You can also gutload with “Reapash bug burger” we use this product daily when preparing a salad for our feeder bug colonies covered in calcium, bee pollen, and bug burger.

Dark leafy greens are best for a staple for your insects.

Some things you may feel inclined to feed the insects your chameleon will be eating are toxic so always check if you're not 110% positive. This is like a gremlin don't go steering away from the care guide thinking things won't go wrong because they will.

If you bless this creature with proper husbandry he/she will more than likely thrive and bless you with an otherworldly experience for years to come.