

Calumma brevicorne

Short-Horned Chameleon

Care Guide



Steve Hefner



*A ChameleonAcademy.com
Publication*



SCAN ME

For a detailed explanation of each section of this Care Summary, and even more information about *Calumma brevicorne*, you can scan the QR code to be taken directly to the webpage.



Calumma brevicorne

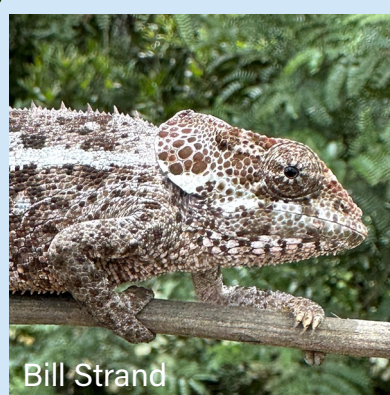
Short-Horned Chameleon

Natural History



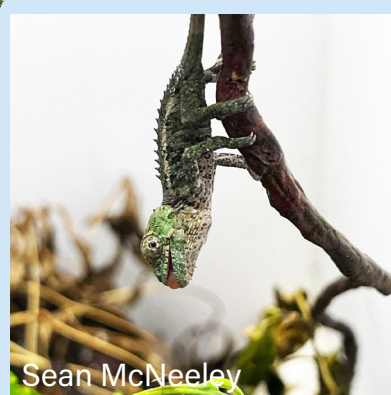
Steve Hefner

Adult Male



Bill Strand

Young Adult Female



Sean McNeeley

Neonate

Natural History

Range	Eastern Madagascar
Elevation	2300 - 6000 ft, 810 - 1000 m



Seasons

	Wet	Dry	Wet
Avg High	81°F/27°C	73°F/23°C	79°F/26°C
Avg Low	68°F/20°C	59°F/15°C	64°F/18°C

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

Chart is based on seasonal estimated averages. The range is very wide.

The native habitat on Madagascar is defined by a wet and dry season. The dry season is cooler in temperature.



Calumma brevicorne Short-Horned Chameleon

Cage Set-up

For detailed information visit <https://chameleonacademy.com/short-horned-chameleon-calumma-brevicorne>

Indoor Cage Size

Minimum	2' x 2' x 4'
Retail	36" x 18" x 36"
Custom Build	3' x 2' x 4'
	or Greater

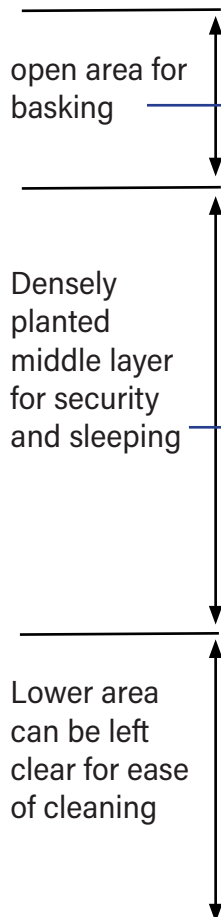
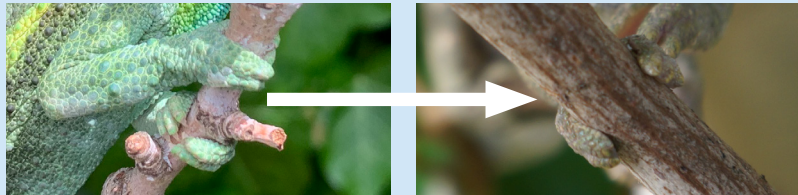
Cohabitation

Short-horned Chameleons should not be kept together. Not in pairs, not females, and not babies. Short term is tolerated, long term is basis for serious health issues.

Cage Set-up

- **Required:** One chameleon per cage
- **Required:** Must have suitable perching area behind plants where chameleon can hide entire body from view and block UVB light from above
- **Ideal:** Place cage so top basking branch is above your head height

For perching, use horizontal branches with a diameter between chameleon feet reaching all the way to half way around.





Calumma brevicorne

Short-Horned Chameleon

Care Parameters

Care parameters based on husbandry used by Sean McNeeley and Steve Hefner

Temperature

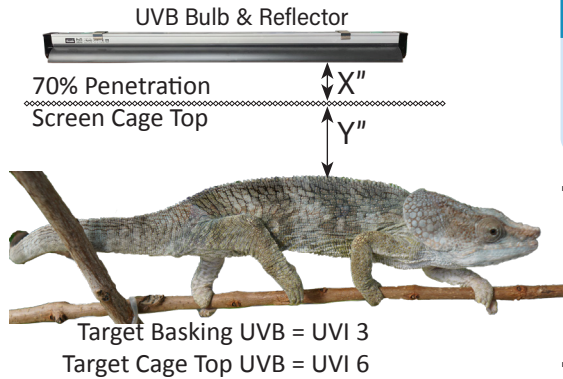
Season	Dry	Wet
DayTime	73°F / 23°C	75°F/24°C
NightTime	59°F / 15°C	68°F/20°C
Basking	80°F/27°C	

Humidity

DayTime	40% - 50% RH ¹
NightTime	80% to 100% RH ²

¹Ensure that branches and surfaces dry daily
²Provide air movement to avoid stagnant air

UVB

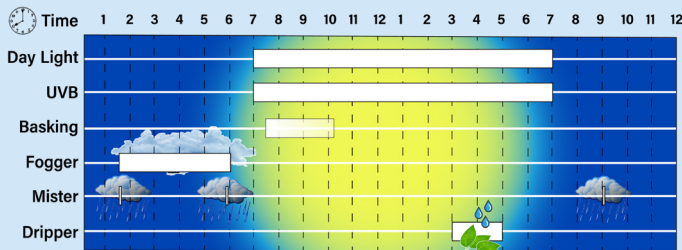


Technology	Bulb Strength	X	Y
T5 HO Linear	5.0 or 6%	2"	4"
T5 HO Linear	10.0 or 12%	6"	6"

- X" + Y" distance is from UVB bulb to back of chameleon through a 70% penetration screen top panel of the cage.
- X" + Y" distance is average compromise over bulb lifetime. Use Solarmeter 6.5 for exact measurements.
- Bulb must have a dedicated reflector for these numbers to be accurate.

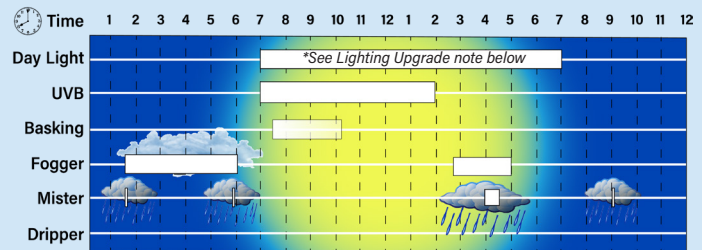
Hydration & Lighting

Dry Season April - October



Mister cycles are 1-2 minutes in length

Wet Season November - March



Short Mister cycles are 1-2 minutes in length;
 Afternoon rainshower is 5 min

Ventilation: Air exchange is critical for health. Adequate ventilation will ensure that our cage surfaces and branches dry out during the day. Constantly wet surfaces are unhygienic. Be especially careful with wet season replication. Gentle fans sucking air from cage and blowing out may be used to aid with hybrid cage drying if needed.

***Lighting Upgrade:** To more effectively simulate wet season cloud cover, add a weaker "cloud cover" light in parallel with main daylight fixture. Turn off main light with UVB light before afternoon rain shower and leave cloud cover light on until nightfall.

Feeding

Life Stage	Frequency	Quantity (Feeder Units)
Growing or Gravid	Every day	No Limit
Adult	Every other day	3-4 Units

- One Feeder Unit = one "Safe Size" cricket
- Add feeder variety at equivalent volume
- Ex: if "safe size" cricket = 1/2" then 1 feeder unit = 1/2" cricket or 4* 1/4" Crickets or 20 fruit flies

Safe cricket size



Supplementation (REQUIRES UVB)	
Every Feeding	Once per Month
Plain Calcium NO vitamin D3	Multi-Vitamin with up to 10k IU/lb Vit D3
Recommended: add Bee pollen 50/50 mix	100k IU/lb Vit A Examples:



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Reproduction

Care parameters based on husbandry used by Sean McNeeley and Steve Hefner



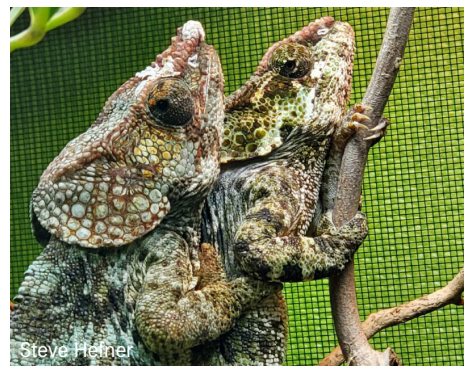
Jay DuBay

Displaying Male Coloration



Steve Hefner

Non-Receptive Female



Steve Hefner

Mating



Jay DuBay

Gravid Female Coloration



Jay DuBay

Female Laying Eggs



Sean McNeeley

Baby Hatchling

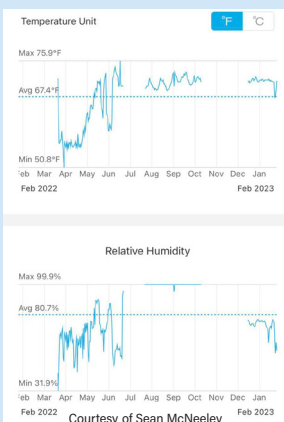
Breeding Stats

Reproduction	Egg Laying
Clutch Size	20 - 30
Gestation	
Incubation Time	11-13 Months

Incubation

- 1) Start incubation at 65F
- 2) Gradually lower temperature to 55F and maintain for 45-60 days.
- 3) Slowly raise to 74F and incubate until hatching

The chart below shows the temperature/humidity readings from an incubation by Sean McNeeley of eggs laid on March 16, 2022 and hatched Feb 12, 2023



Baby Raising

- Individual raising required
- Heavily planted
- Feed as much as babies will eat
- Beware of excessive heat/UVB

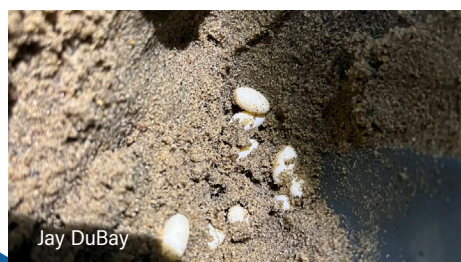
Laying Bin

Substrate:

- 50% organic soil
- 50% playsand

Soil Depth: 5-6"

Visual privacy during laying



Jay DuBay



Bill Strand



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Baby Care



Densely planted screen cage



Bio-active Hybrid Cage

Baby Housing

The proper housing is individually keeping each baby in its own cage. Provide plenty of plant cover for them to hide in. Hybrid cages and glass terrariums may be used as long as there is airflow.

Feeding Baby *Calumma brevicorne*

Babies are often fed on fruit flies. Start with *Drosophila melanogaster* until they are large enough to take *D. hydei*. Wild fruit flies drawn in by a fruit cup can be supplemental prey. Other options include bean beetles and pin head crickets. Feed as much as they will eat. There are growth spurts and you want those to be well nourished or stunted growth can occur. Supplementation is same as adult regimen, but can be started after a few weeks old. Move from fruit flies to crickets as soon as possible to gain weight.

Environmental Parameters

Babies may be cared for as adults as far as heat, UVB, and hydration, But you must account for any reduction in cage space. For example, in a small cage, the heat from the daylight bulb may warm the area enough to not need a heat lamp because of the small cage volume.



Fruit Flies are perfect hatchling food



Professional Breeding



Plastic Bin



Glass terrarium



Chameleon Academy

How To Use This Guide

Approved Use of this Care Guide

This care guide is meant for community use. You are welcome to use it, unaltered, on your websites, Facebook groups, or any other application which calls for chameleon care information. You are welcome to print this guide as a customer reference at reptile shows or veterinary offices. If you use Chameleon Academy care information then you may refer any questions you get about the parameters listed here to me. If the question is not answered in my website details then I will answer it personally.

Care Guides are just starting points

A care guide represents the ideal conditions, as we currently understand them, that have worked for the widest number of that chameleon species. This is an average. Your chameleon is an individual in your unique environmental conditions. Therefore, it should be no surprise if something needs to be adjusted as you observe your chameleon's behavior. Does he want the basking bulb on for longer? Does he need more hydration? Use this care sheet only to establish your initial parameters, but then **listen to what your chameleon is telling you!** These parameters are meant to get your started, not to lock you in to certain numbers. Your chameleon is the expert in what chameleons need! But make sure you fully understand the situation before changing the parameter. This is where constant study of chameleon language is imperative for successful long term chameleon keeping.

Further Research Opportunities

Each Chameleon Academy care summary has a website link that will take you to a deeper discussion regarding each parameter. This is the first step to deeper understanding of the parameters. The rest of the website will then provide more context. The Chameleon Academy outreach includes the **Chameleon Academy Podcast** with over 250 episodes interviewing the top keepers, breeders, veterinarians, and scientists in the world. This podcast is available on any major podcast playing app, a dedicated free Chameleon Academy iTunes/Google Play app, and on the <https://ChameleonAcademy.com> website. You may also consult the **Chameleon Academy YouTube channel** for video tutorials.

Conflicting Husbandry Advice

There are diverse experiences in the community and each person can speak only to what they know. Therefore, you will find conflicting advice throughout the community. Your best approach to dealing with these differences is to do your research into the person you trust the most or is directly involved with helping you. The most obvious choice is to follow the advice of the breeder who is helping you with your first chameleon. Do not worry if other people (or even I) say differently. Follow your chosen person until you are comfortable enough with chameleon keeping that you can decide on a different approach.