

Greater Cincinnati Herpetological Society
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Common Name: Day Gecko

Scientific Name: *Phelsuma* spp.

Native to: Most day gecko species can be found on land structures of the south-western Indian Ocean, including East Africa and Madagascar.

Size: Day geckos range in size from a few inches up to a foot in length.

General appearance: There are over 70 species of day gecko. The color and pattern can vary by species. In general, most day geckos have a base color of green with patterns of black, brown, red, yellow or blue.

Housing requirements:

A Note About Captivity: The information provided below is a rough guideline for the most common species of day gecko in captivity. Please do additional research on the species of day gecko you are going to purchase. The skin of these geckos is also incredibly sensitive and they are not to be handled. Instead, they should be coaxed into some type of container for transport and cleaning.

Enclosure: Enclosure size depends upon the species you chose. Larger species of day gecko will need a larger enclosure, such as a 20 gallon tank. Pairs of geckos may even need larger enclosures. Smaller species of day gecko can be housed in pairs in 10 gallon tanks. Since these animals are arboreal, taller cages are preferred over longer enclosures. Tanks could even be stood on end to allow animals to climb.

Temperature: Most species of day gecko should be kept at temperatures of 80° - 90° F. Temperature should not exceed 100° F

Heat/Light: Day geckos require UVB light which can be provided with fluorescent tubes or mercury vapor bulbs. Mercury vapor bulbs are preferred over fluorescent bulbs for this species because of their superior UVB output. Since these animals are arboreal, a basking light positioned above the enclosure is preferred to under tank heaters, unless one is needed for increasing ambient temperature. Temperatures should always be checked with a thermometer.

Substrate: Cage bedding can include newspaper or paper towel, which is unlikely to be ingested. For a more natural look, moistened cypress mulch, peat moss, coconut fiber or untreated top soil can be used as substrate. Due to high humidity levels, it is a good idea to provide drainage under the substrate in the form of pea gravel or a false bottom tank.

Environment: As stated, day geckos are arboreal and will bask under the light provided. As their body temperature rises, they can move towards the ground to escape the heat. Hiding places must be provided, which can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Any type of hollow pipe or tube (such as PVC pipe or bamboo pieces) will provide security for day geckos. Cork bark can also be used for hiding and climbing surfaces.

Diet: Day geckos will eat a variety of insects as well as fruit based baby foods. There are also prepared diets on the market available for day geckos. Always provide a standing dish of calcium for them to eat.

Maintenance: The enclosure should be spot cleaned daily and thoroughly cleaned monthly. We also recommend that the handler thoroughly wash their hands after transporting the day geckos or any of their cage accessories.

Other references or recommended reading:

Christenson, Greg. 2006. Day Gecko Care Sheet. Available on-line:
http://www.daygecko.com/html/care_sheets.html Retrieved Nov. 2008

Quick, Richard. 2005. *Christmas Gecko; Giant Madagascar Day Gecko (Phelsuma madagascarensis grandis); A Quick Natural History and Care Guide.*

Van Heygen, Emmanuel. 2004. Biogeography of the Genus *Phelsuma*. Available on-line:
<http://www.phelsumania.com/public/biogeography.html> Retrieved Nov. 2008

This document is for guidance only and should not be used as the sole source of information. New information is being developed daily. It is recommended that a concerted effort be made to maintain up-to-date knowledge of the animals of interest