



Chahoua Geckos

Mniarogekko chahoua

INTERMEDIATE • 8–10 IN ADULT • 15–20 YR LIFESPAN • ARBOREAL • NOCTURNAL • NEW CALEDONIA

New Caledonia's other gecko, and the one experienced keepers save up for. Chahouas are heavy-bodied arboreal geckos with a calm, deliberate way of moving; they climb where a crested gecko would leap. They are still not a starter animal. Pine Isle or Mainland locality, the price differs and the care does not. Either way, expect more space than a crested gecko needs, steadier humidity, and patience: growth here is measured in years.

AT A GLANCE	
Ambient temp	72–78 °F
Basking spot	80–84 °F
Night temp	68–72 °F
Humidity	60–80 % (70–80 % adult)
UVB	Low output, recommended
Diet	CGD, insects, fruit
Feeding	CGD every 2 days, insects 1–2×/wk
Adult size	8–10 inches
Lifespan	15–20 years



Captive-bred chahoua geckos, the mossy New Caledonian geckos, show up on specialist breeder tables at NARBC shows.

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01

The Calm Climber

Chahouas move like they mean it. The tail is genuinely prehensile, and it anchors the animal while it reaches for the next branch. That deliberate temperament makes short handling sessions manageable, but tolerance is not enjoyment. Wait until a young gecko is grown and settled before handling at all. Keep sessions brief, work low over a soft surface, and never lift one by the tail. Chahouas can regrow a dropped tail, unlike their crested cousins, though the replacement is never the original.

02

Vertical Space at Every Stage

Height beats floor space at every stage. Hatchlings start in 8×8×12 and move up as they grow; adults need 24×18×36 as a floor and do better in 36×18×36. Racks are not an option for any stage of this species. House them one to an enclosure. Adult chahouas are territorial, and two males will fight until one is badly bitten. A male left with a female breeds her year-round, and her calcium goes into eggs instead of bone.

STAGE	MINIMUM	PREFERRED	NOTES
Hatchling	8×8×12	12×12×18	More fragile than crested hatchlings; steady humidity is non-negotiable.
Juvenile	12×12×18	18×18×24	Growth is slow: 2–3 years to adult size. Vertical space, never a rack.
Subadult	18×18×24	24×18×36	Heavier-bodied than a crested gecko; climbing structure must be sturdy.
Adult	24×18×36	36×18×36	Humidity climbs to 70–80 %. Bioactive strongly recommended. House alone.

Enclosure sizes from Habitat-OS life-stage guidance. Vertical orientation at every stage, and no stage of this species belongs in a rack.

03

Heat, Light, and the Night Drop

This is a cool-room animal. Hold ambient at 72–78 °F, offer a single basking spot of 80–84 °F near the top, and let the room fall to 68–72 °F at night. That night drop matters; it is part of the animal, not neglect. **Sustained heat above 84 °F kills New Caledonian geckos faster than any cold snap will.** Low-output UVB is recommended overhead, on a day cycle, with shaded cover so the gecko chooses its dose. Skip heat rocks entirely.

04

Humidity & Water

Run humidity at 60–80 %, with adults toward the top of that band, 70–80 %. The rhythm matters more than the number itself. Mist heavily, then let the enclosure dry back before the next soaking. Stagnant, always-wet air with no airflow is how you get respiratory trouble and mold. Chahouas drink droplets off leaves and glass, so mist at night and morning, and still keep a shallow dish of clean water. Hatchlings are the least forgiving of swings.

05

Substrate and Structure

Bioactive is strongly recommended, and for good reason: a planted, drained substrate with springtails and isopods holds humidity steady instead of spiking and crashing. Give a deep organic mix, leaf litter, and live plants. Then build the top half properly. A chahoua is heavy for its size, so cork tubes and thick branches beat the thin bamboo a crested gecko gets away with. Wedge cork slabs against the back wall; that shaded height is where the animal spends its days.

06

Feeding

Commercial crested gecko diet, the CGD on the glance table, is the backbone: offer it fresh every two days in a cup mounted where they climb, not on the floor. Add appropriately sized insects one to two times a week, dusted with plain calcium that carries no D3 and no added phosphorus. Swap in a reptile multivitamin on one insect feeding a week while they grow, twice a month once adult. Treat fruit as a garnish rather than a meal. Growth takes two to three years, and no extra food changes that.

07

Health Red Flags

Stuck shed is the quiet one. A ring of old skin tightens as it dries until the digit beneath it dies, so check the feet after every shed and fix the humidity, not the toe. Watch for a soft or trembling jaw, a spine that has lost its line, or hips that suddenly stand out, all early metabolic bone disease. A gecko sitting low on the cool glass, gaping and dull, is overheating. Any of these means a reptile vet now, not next month.

Husbandry data: Habitat-OS species library. Structure follows the NARBC show handout series. Every animal is an individual — when in doubt, ask the breeder at the table or a reptile veterinarian.