

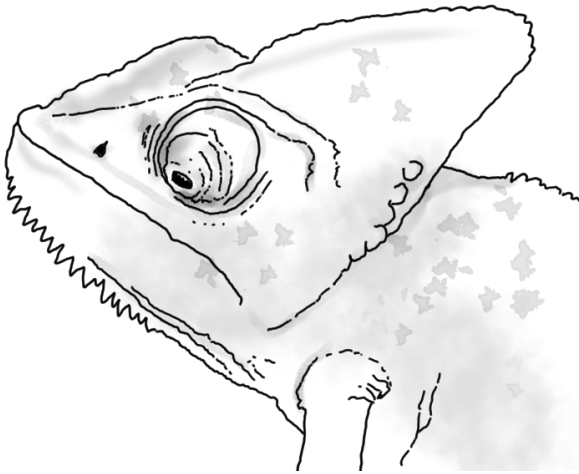
# Veiled Chameleon Care Sheet



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Congratulations on your new pet. The popularity of the veiled chameleon is due to a number of factors: veiled chameleons are relatively hardy, large, beautiful, and prolific. Veiled chameleons are native to Yemen and southern Saudi Arabia, they are quite tolerant of temperature and humidity extremes, which contributes to its hardiness as a captive. Veiled chameleons are among the easiest chameleons to care for, but they still require careful attention. They range in size from 6-12 inches and will live up to five years with the proper care. Males tend to be larger and more colorful than females. With their ability to change colors, prehensile

tails, independently moving eyes and stuttering walk make them fascinating to watch. They become stressed very easily so regular handling is not recommended.

## HOUSING-----

A full-screen enclosure is a must for veiled chameleons. Zoomed's ReptiBreeze is an ideal habitat. Glass aquariums can lead to respiratory diseases due to the stagnant air not being circulated, and they will be stressed if they can see their reflection. These Chameleons also need a large enclosure to climb around in because smaller enclosures will stress them. A 3'x3'x3' or 2'x2'x4' habitat is best, but larger is better. Chameleons should be house separately to avoid fighting. The interior of the enclosure should be furnished with medium sized vines and foliage for the chameleons to hide in. The medium sized vines provide important horizontal perches for the chameleon to rest and bask. Synthetic plants with plastic leaves can be used in conjunction with common, non-toxic plants to provide ample foliage. Commonly used non-toxic plants that can be used include ficus, schefflera, hibiscus and pothos. These live plants not only provide cover but they also help to maintain humidity inside the enclosure. Try to place some foliage between the outside and the Chameleon, as the activity in the room can stress them. For the bottom, use a cage carpet as it is easy to clean. The relative humidity in the enclosure should be kept around 50-60% most of the time, this can easily be accomplished by misting the enclosure once or twice during the day.

## HEATING AND LIGHT-----

Veiled Chameleons need two forms of light for approximately 12 hours a day. First, they need a basking spot using a heat bulb that provides 85-95 degree fahrenheit. This should be at one end of the cage. The cool side if the enclosure should be 70-75 degrees. A ceramic heater can be used if the air temperature in the room is too cool during the day. At night they can tolerate temperatures in the mid 60's. A ceramic heater should be used if

needed as they must have darkness to sleep. They will also need UVB lighting. UVB, which is usually provided by natural sunlight, is important in calcium metabolism but is filtered out by glass and therefore must be provided by artificial lights. Both these lights should be placed on the top of the enclosure with the closest perches approximately 6-8" below. Veiled chameleons, like other reptiles regulate their own body temperature and it is thus important to provide them with a temperature gradient inside their enclosure. This arrangement provides the warmest temperatures directly under the heat bulb and cooler temps lower down in the enclosures. R-Zilla and Exo Terra both make products to simulate their natural lighting.

## **DIET-----**

Veiled chameleons are primarily insectivorous but will take some plant matter in their diet. Providing feeder insects with the correct balance of calcium to phosphorus is of critical importance. If reptiles are not provided with a balanced diet, they will develop metabolic bone disease. Gut-loading involves feeding crickets a high calcium diet before they are fed to the chameleon. Fluker's Orange Cubes provide adequate supplements. The crickets should also be dusted with a vitamin/mineral supplement as well. Meal worms and wax worms can be offered as an occasional treat. Young veileds must be fed every day, twice a day if possible. The best food source for young veileds are small crickets. Adult veileds will eat every other day. The best way to offer feeder insects to veiled chameleons is in a raised dish. Use an opaque dish with smooth sides so the insects cannot crawl out, but the chameleon can easily locate its food. This prevents the insects from dispersing into the cage and irritating the animal while it sleeps. Another important aspect of veiled chameleon captive diets is providing clean drinking water. Veiled chameleons will not drink from a dish of water. The best way to provide them with water is to set up a drip system. It is best to place the water source so that it drips onto the side of a leaf, where the animal can easily lap it off. Be careful adjusting the drip system, do not flood the cage.

## **CLEANING-----**

Remove feces from the habitat daily. Mist the enclosure 2x a day. Rinse the water dripper out daily. Once a week, remove the chameleon to a safe place, then thoroughly scrub the enclosure, water dripper and artificial plants. Use a weak bleach solution or Healthy Habitat to clean. Rinse carefully removing all the bleach smell. Replace the plants and put a clean, dry cage carpet on the bottom.

## **HEALTH-----**

Always wash your hands before and after handling a reptile. Chameleons regularly shed their skin, mist the enclosure to maintain the right amount of humidity to do this. Your chameleon should be active and alert with clear eyes, nose and healthy skin. It should eat regularly. If you notice bumps, swelling, labored breathing, paralysis or weight loss consult your veterinarian.

## **FERTILITY-----**

Consult one of our pet specialists.

## **CHECKLIST-----**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Screened habitat 2'x2'x4' or 3'x3'x3' for one adult | <input type="checkbox"/> vitamin / mineral supplement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> calcium gut load for crickets                       | <input type="checkbox"/> ceramic heater               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> misting bottle                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> water drip system            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> plants and branches                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> humidity gauge               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> thermometer   | <input type="checkbox"/> UVB lighting                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> basking light                                       |   |