

Species Spotlight Saturday

Cuban False Chameleons- Chamaeleolis species.

These species are appealing for a number of reasons. They are a medium sized lizard. They have exceptional camouflage capabilities. They morphologically resemble anoles, but also have some characteristics similar to chameleons, such as independently moving eyes, and the bony casque on their skull.

Generally speaking, they are a very calm species. They will gape when threatened, but they are not quick to bite.

All members of the genus are from the Cuba, where they spend much of their time blending in with their habitat, mimicking the twigs and branches they rest on.

The ambient temperatures should be around the low 70F, but they will actively bask in areas around 90F, and certainly utilize UVB. So larger enclosures are certainly favorable, to achieve a nice temperature gradient. In the wild, they do specialize to feed on snails, but in captivity they will take other insect offerings without issue. One simply needs to be mindful that the animals are still receiving adequate calcium and vitamin D3.



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S1.E12: Chamaeleolis

As mentioned above, these species mimic twigs and branches for camouflage. As such, those items should be dense in their enclosure. The enclosure should be set up to have plenty of small-diameter branches and vines, in varying orientations to create a network of perches. This allows the animal to rest at any desired position, but more importantly, to feel comfortable and safe while navigating through the enclosure. To further their sense of comfort in the enclosure, additional plants to provide further cover should be used.



They can be set up in all-screen enclosures, or solid-sided. One just needs to ensure the humidity isn't staying too high, and that ventilation is adequate.

Substrate is generally either layered and bioactive, or left to be primarily sphagnum moss. These species require a moderate humidity level, so a layer of sphagnum at the top will help maintain this, even if using general substrate underneath. You will want to make sure your substrate drains adequately, as these species primarily drink from moving water sources. Most keepers will set up a dripper system for them, so ensuring proper drainage is a must.

The main thing to pay close attention to is their hydration. One sign to keep a look for is that their eyes will sink in if dehydrated. Keeping in mind that they primarily drink from moving water, if you find yours dehydrated, it will be best to set up another dripping system in a different position, until you figure out a spot that the animal is comfortable drinking from.

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