

Species Spotlight Saturday

Flying Geckos!

Ptychozoon kuhli is the most common species in the hobby.

Background:

Flying geckos aren't necessarily tricky to keep. However, the biggest issue people have with them is getting them to acclimate, since most offered for sale are wild caught imports. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, as if you know this going into a purchase, instead of impulse buying, then you can plan accordingly.

The geckos can be somewhat fragile during the acclimation period, and are especially prone to dehydration. So keeping their humidity up, and watering properly is crucial. Fresh imports often come with complimentary red mites. These mites don't adversely affect the animals in small numbers, but when they expand in numbers, they quickly start to irritate the animals and stress them out further, beyond the stress of trying to acclimate to a new enclosure. So if you spot these mites on one, you can grip the animal and use a q-tip dipped in soapy water (a few drops of dawn dish soap in a bowl of water and stirred), and wipe the mites away. The mites can grip somewhat well, so some may require tweezers to pull away, but typically if you place a drop of soap water on them, they will release after a few seconds since they're suffocating. Be sure to thoroughly check the geckos skin flaps as well.



That being said, once you have an animal that is set up well, and through acclimation, you're pretty much in the clear to enjoy it for the remainder of it's lifespan. Keep in mind that the species is rather fast, so they should be treated as a display species, and only handled when absolutely necessary.

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S1.E10: Ptychozoon

I don't say these things to dissuade people from working with them. I wish more people were putting in the effort!

Care:

In the wild, the species tend to stay a fair height from the ground, to give ample buffer space for when they need to utilize their ability to 'fly' (falling with style) to safety. Therefore, their enclosures in captivity should keep this in mind. They aren't going to utilize floor space much at all, but will utilize nearly every inch of vertical space provided. Their decor should be a number of branches in various orientations (we also utilize different sized branches throughout.) They also do best in temperate humidity, so live plants will help keep the humidity levels up, and make the enclosure look and feel much more natural, while filling out the gaps between the branches. We encourage bioactive enclosures, complete with microfauna clean-up crew such as isopods and springtails. Having these in your enclosure will minimize the amount you need to clean, as they will eat leftover shed pieces, fecals, ect. A 18"x 18"x 24" or equivalent sized enclosure should be considered a bare minimum for the species, and larger is always better.

Humidity should remain around 55-60% , with some peaks around 80-85% when misting. Misting should be done lightly at least once daily, and heavily every 3-4 days, depending on your ambient humidity levels in your area.

Despite being nocturnal, they will certainly position themselves to sleep and bask under UVB during the day, and do appreciate a small basking area of ~85-90F. Ambient temperatures should be approximately room temperature, so in the 72-75F range. Turning off the basking area at night will allow a nice night drop in temperatures.

They are insectivores, so while their care is somewhat overlapping with species such as crested geckos, they do not eat the meal replacement diets such as Pangea or Repashy. We offer ours insects 2-3 times a week. Typically 5/8" crickets for adults, and 1/4" or 1/2" crickets for younger animals.



We don't do anything special to get ours breeding. Our entire room goes through seasons, with reduced misting and shortened photoperiods, but breeding behavior and eggs haven't necessarily correlated with those shifts. They are egg-glueers, so they aren't a species that you'll often be able to pull the eggs and incubate elsewhere, unless you get lucky and they lay on a piece of removable decor. Some keepers have resorted to cycling their pairs through different vivariums, so that the eggs can hatch where they are laid, without the worry of whether the adults will attack/eat them (which is known to happen occasionally.)

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