

Veiled Chameleon Companion Care Guide



WHEN DO I SEE A VET?

- Annual wellness exam
- Brumation (hibernation) wellness exams
- Not eating or pooping for over a week
- Open mouth breathing or noise while breathing
- Diarrhea, blood in feces, vomiting, or regurgitation
- Retained shed, redness, swelling, or open wounds of the skin
- Swollen eyes, swelling or bleeding of the mouth
- Closed or sunken eyes
- Any health concerns or questions

Feeding

Baby and Juveniles: 1-2 times a day

Adults: 1 time a day, every other day, or as needed to maintain desired weight

Calcium and vitamin supplements:

Dust insects daily with calcium and vitamins every 2 weeks.

Consult with your veterinarian to discuss the possible need of adding vitamin D₃ to your calcium dusting as in some cases it may be beneficial or recommended.

Recommended Dusting Supplements:

Calcium:

Repashy Calcium Plus Reptile Supplement

Flukers Calcium without D₃ and phosphorus free

ZooMed Repti Calcium without D₃

Vitamins:

ZooMed Reptivite with D₃

Repashy Calcium Plus LoD Supplement

Arcadia RevitaliseD₃

Veiled chameleons are pure insectivores aka carnivores and eat an insect based diet. There are several appropriate methods to feeding adults including offering 2-3 dusted insects once or offering 4-5 dusted insects every other day.

Babies and gravid females should have free access to as much food as they can consume to allow for appropriate growth and egg development. Maintaining a balance and routine diet is important to maintaining stable health in a veiled chameleon.

Main Insect Food Sources: (~90% of Diet)

Crickets, dubia roaches, or grasshoppers due to low fat to high protein ratios.

Snack Insect Sources: (~10% of Diet)

Mealworms, superworms, hornworms, phoenix worms, silkworms, or butterworms due to high fat or low protein

Common Illnesses

- Eggbinding or dystocia
- Vitamin A deficiency
- Retained shed (Dysecdysis)
- Intestinal parasites
- Nutritional Secondary Hyperparathyroidism (Metabolic Bone Disease)
- Cloacal prolapse
- Trauma and open wounds
- Renal disease
- Dehydration

Is My Veiled Chameleon A Male or Female?

In veiled chameleons there is a physical characteristic that can easily be used to determine sex. In addition, another reliable way in determining sex can be done by a skilled veterinary professional through several methods at a younger age including probing for hemipene pockets, endoscopic sex determination, and ultrasound sex determination. Listed below are the helpful characteristic that you look for to visually differentiate a male and female. Along with adult colorations to look for.

Tarsal Spur – Male veiled chameleons have a spur or bump on their rear feet. This can be visible at hatching and can help in determining the sex of veiled chameleons

Coloration and Size – Male veiled chameleons grow larger than females and have more colorful and defined casque. Gravid (pregnant) females when mated display black colorations with yellow and blue spots when threatened or intimidated by another male attempting to mate.

Husbandry

Enclosure Sizes

Babies: Small cage (12" L x 12" W x 24" H) or larger enclosure

Adults: Large cage (24" L x 24" W x 48" H) or larger enclosure

Enclosures should have a basking light, UVB light, fog and/or misting system, and décor to provide enrichment for your veiled chameleon. Veiled chameleons are arboreal reptiles that require more vertical space than floorspace space.

Housing

Veiled chameleons are territorial reptiles and should be housed alone unless housed for breeding purposes. Housing together is a risk for injury and fighting that can be harmful to your veiled chameleon's health.

Humidity and Hydration

Ideal humidity for a veiled chameleon is 30-50% humidity during the day and 80-100% humidity during the night and should be monitored using a hygrometer inside the enclosure. Early morning fogging is recommended for 3-5 hours ending an hour before lights turn on. Timed misting throughout the day at intervals of 30-90 minutes is suggested to maintain daytime humidity and provided a consistent source of water for proper hydration and drinking.

Canopy/Décor

Sterilized branches, bend-a-branch inserts, reptile vines, or sterilized bamboo branches are all acceptable perches and climbing materials in your veiled chameleon's enclosure. Plastic plants or live nontoxic plants allow for a canopy to provide shelter and security as well and enrichment for climbing around and surfaces to collect mist for hydration. Avoid plastic plants that have removable leaves as these can be a risk for accidental consumption.

Recommended Live Plants:

- Weeping Fig (*Ficus benjamina*)
- Climbing Fig (*Ficus pumila*)
- Dwarf umbrella tree (*Schefflera arboricola*)
- Money tree (*Pachira aquatica*)
- China doll (*Radermachera sinica*)
- Hibiscus (*Hibiscus spp*)

Enrichment

Feeding Dish– Allows your chameleon to stay stimulated and seek out the dish in enclosure for their insect food source.

Supervised Time Outside Their Enclosure –

Make sure to have a clean, item free area where you can supervise the activity of your veiled chameleon. A nontoxic tree, or large grapevine branch allows for stimulation and climbing. Feeding snacks at this time can entice movement and exercise. Make sure no other pets including dogs, or cats have access to the chameleon when outside its enclosure.

Lighting and Temperatures

Veiled chameleons are a diurnal tropical to subtropical species most active during the day.

Lighting:

Ideal hours of daylight to nightlight:

12 hours on and 12 hours off

Recommended UVB lights include:

T5 Strip Lights:

- Arcadia T5 D3 6% UVB at 6"
- Arcadia T5 D3 12% at 12"
- Zoomed Reptisun 5.0 UVB T5-HO

Temperatures:

Basking Temperatures: 80-85°F

Cool Side: 72-78°F

Nighttime Temperatures: 55-65°F

Avoid temperatures below 40°F due to risk of causing digestive issue and other illnesses.

Information by Dr. Brandon J. Louth

