

Panther Chameleon Care Sheet

The key to chameleon husbandry is finding the right balance of the major five. The major five are: cage size, lighting, temperature, humidity/watering, and nutrition.

Cage Sizes

We feel that the bigger the better. The only downfall of having a large cage is if your chameleon is small, it cannot find the small feeders that are appropriate size for size of your chameleon. Also, you do not want to put too many feeders in the cage at once because the uneaten feeders can eat the chameleon's faeces which can spread bacteria to the chameleon if that feeders is then eaten. We also suggest using aluminium screen cages for high airflow and keep our baby panthers in exo terra glass vivariums (30x45x30cm) up to the age of 3 months or so. Beyond this age

they are transferred to larger mesh vivarium. Contrary to popular belief we have found that panthers thrive in enclosure. We do not use any substrate in our cages, but simply wipe away any waste each day. Ensure that there are

plenty of branches for climbing (horizontal & vertical) and if live plants are used, do your research as to what types are safe and suitable (we use Ficus).

Temperature

All our chameleon cages have a general temperature of around 80F. We also provide a hot spot in the form of a spot light bulb where the chameleon can sit beneath to access a higher temperature of 90F or so. All our spotlights are on a dimming thermostat to ensure that the vivarium does not overheat. We do not heat our cages during the night-time and the

temperature will fall to 60F/65F in our facility with no ill effects to the chameleons. If your room drops much below this temperature you may want to consider some night-time heat in the vivarium although we believe they benefit from a night-time drop. Of course, panther chameleons require UVB lighting: we recommend Arcadia 6.0 or Zoomed Repti-Sun 5.0 UV tubes. These should be placed on top of the mesh of the cage such that the chameleon can get to within 12" of the tube.

Diet

We feed locusts and brown crickets to our chameleons. Three month old babies are eating crickets of approximately 1cm long and food size should be increased as your panther grows. Our baby panthers are fed every day on a few crickets each. Adults are fed 4 times per week. You will need to supplement the diet with calcium and multi vitamin powder. We supplement with calcium every other feed and multi vitamins once per week.

Hydration/Humidity

People often think that hydration and humidity are one and the same, when in fact they are different: Hydration – this is how much water your panther drinks. Panthers will not drink from a dish but instead rely on droplets of

water on leaves and branches within the cage to drink from. We spray our vivariums twice per day that there are sufficient droplets on the leaves for the chameleon to lap up. There is no need to saturate the cage and we do not spray our chameleons directly.

Humidity – this is the relative humidity in the cage i.e. the moisture in the air. We do not believe that there is any value in trying to achieve a certain humidity level with captive panther chameleons. When you spray the cage the humidity will be high but will quickly fall away as the cage dries out (especially in mesh cages). It is beneficial that the cage dries out during the day rather than remaining constantly humid. We have never had any shedding issues due to low humidity.

Cage Mates

Panther chameleons are solitary animals and will become stressed when kept together (the exception is young babies being reared and adults paired together temporarily for breeding purposes). Even two females kept together will more likely than not show signs of stress. Males should not be able to see each other at all (even at distance) and should be out of sight of females too.

Upon Arrival of your Baby Panther Chameleon

When your baby arrives at its new home, try and avoid unnecessary handling, just place him in the vivarium, let him warm up and then spray lightly and leave alone. That evening offer him a couple of crickets. Please don't be surprised if he doesn't seem keen to feed for a day or so. This is normal and providing he is kept correctly he will soon be tucking in and growing like a Mad.