



# Lone Mountain

••• ANIMAL HOSPITAL •••



Known for beautiful arrays of colors and patterns and interesting behaviors, chameleons have become prevalent in pop culture and some of the most sought after reptiles.



## Introduction to Chameleons

### **Panther Chameleon - *Chamaeleo pardalis***

Originates from the northern part of Madagascar  
Considered most colorful of the chameleons with many varieties from green to blue to red  
Thrive in warm, humid climates  
Very territorial, especially during breeding season

### **Veiled Chameleon - *Chamaeleo calytratus***

Originates from the Yemen coast of Saudi Arabia  
Considered one of the hardiest species of chameleons  
Tolerate either extreme of temperature or humidity, despite their tolerance of extreme conditions, they do best somewhere in between  
One of the most aggressive species; but docile towards humans

### **Jackson 's Chameleon - *Chamaeleo jacksonii xantholophus***

Originates from Kenya and Tanzania  
The male has three horns protruding from his forehead  
A true montane species coming from areas with temperate days and cool nights and therefore, should not get too hot or too dry

### **Housing**

In general chameleons are territorial and should be housed individually  
House in large enclosures with trees, branches or vines for climbing and to provide security  
Separate from other chameleons visually, even when caged separately, the sight of another chameleon may cause extreme stress and predispose them to illness  
An ideal cage size for an adult male is 2 ft long x 2 ft wide x 4 ft high  
Use a vinyl coated, metal mesh cage covering as uncoated wire lead to rusting.  
Hardware cloth and aluminum window screening are not recommended due to risk of injury  
Safe potted plants include Ficus, Schefflera, Bogainvillaea and Hibiscus. Other decorative plants include Ivy, Pothos or Ferns.  
Plastic plants are preferred for ease of cleaning and hygiene  
Avoid potentially toxic plants or trees.  
Provide branches of varying size to mimic the natural environment and prevent foot injury  
Overall cage design should provide a natural flow to allow basking/shade sites and water/food access

### **Lighting**

Require ultraviolet B lighting (UVB lighting) for 12 – 16 hours per day  
Change UVB bulbs every 6 months to ensure proper UVB ray emission  
Maintain appropriate temperature with incandescent light bulbs or ceramic heat emitters

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## Water

Must have access to a water source, preferably moving water  
Mist the cage plants two to four times each day or provide a drip system  
Humidity levels should be around 60-80 F and should be monitored with a hygrometer  
Live plants aid in maintaining humidity level

## Temperature

Chameleons come from various environments  
Temperatures for Panthers and Veiled Chameleons range from 70 - 85 F  
Temperatures for Jacksons range from 60-78 F and should not be above 82-84 F for long periods of time  
Chameleons prefer a temperature drop of about 10 degrees at night and will bask in the mornings to raise their body temperature

## Diet

Chameleons are omnivores that eat a varied diet of insects and smaller animals and plants  
Insects should be "gut-loaded" with a commercial gut-loading diet and/or dusted with a calcium supplement each feeding and a multivitamin supplement once weekly  
Chameleons can be hand fed individual insects or be placed in a container for feeding  
Veiled chameleons, especially adult males, are unique in that they may supplement their water intake by eating plant material and may accept a small dish of leafy greens and vegetables

## Handling/Behavior

In general chameleons are not pets amenable to handling as readily as other species such as bearded dragons  
Most chameleons prefer to live alone  
Males are very territorial, or protective of their living areas  
Males and females tolerate each other only briefly during the mating season  
When males with bony head horns fight over territory, horns are used to ram the other, but rarely cause injury

*Excerpts from Dr. Rob Coke's "Old World Chameleons: Captive Care and Breeding,"  
Edited by Evelyn Crawford, Veterinary Assistant, Reviewed by Stephanie Lamb, DVM,  
and Darius Starks, DVM, South Wilton Veterinary Group*



**Lone Mountain**  
••• ANIMAL HOSPITAL •••

Lone Mountain Animal Hospital is a full service facility that has been providing pets with the finest professional health care for over 20 years. We offer comprehensive examinations and consultations, along with preventive treatments, surgical & dental procedures, radiology & ultrasound, and laser surgery. We also offer an in-house laboratory to produce the fastest results possible. At Lone Mountain Animal Hospital we see dogs and cats, as well as a long list of exotics including: reptiles, birds, potbelly pigs, rodents, and more! Please visit us online at [LMAH.net](http://LMAH.net) or call 702-645-3116 to schedule an appointment.