

### Handling

Uroplatus should not be handled. Leaf-tailed geckos have evolved to blend seamlessly into their natural environment, and their fragile bodies are specifically adapted to climbing and hiding within foliage. Unlike some other gecko species, leaf-tailed geckos are not designed for regular handling and do not appreciate being picked up or touched. These geckos are primarily nocturnal and spend their days hiding in tree crevices or camouflaging on tree bark. Being handled can induce stress and anxiety, which can have detrimental effects on their overall health and well-being.

### Fun Facts

1. Uroplatus geckos are renowned for their exceptional camouflage abilities. Their body shape, coloration, and skin texture closely resemble tree bark, leaves, or lichen, allowing them to blend into their surroundings.
2. The Uroplatus genus consists of several unique species, each with its own distinct characteristics and range. Some notable species include *Uroplatus fimbriatus*, *Uroplatus guentheri*, *Uroplatus henkeli*, and *Uroplatus sikorae*.



## **Uroplatus spp. Care**

### Tree Critters

Please contact me for further questions!

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### Life expectancy

The lifespan of Uroplatus geckos can vary depending on several factors, including species, care, genetics and overall health. On average, Uroplatus geckos have a lifespan of 8 to 15 years in captivity, but some individuals have been known to live into their late teens or older however this is rare. It's worth noting that different Uroplatus species may have slightly different lifespans. Factors such as genetics, diet, habitat conditions, and stress levels can also impact the lifespan of these geckos. Providing a suitable and well-maintained habitat, a balanced diet, can contribute to their longevity. Proper care practices for Uroplatus geckos include providing appropriate enclosure conditions, including temperature and humidity levels, a varied and nutritious diet, and regular monitoring of their health.

### Sexing

Sexing Leaf Tailed Geckos is easier when they reach adulthood. Males have a visible hemi-penile bulge that can be easily spotted. Some species in the genus have alternative ways of sexing them such as observing notches in tails, skin pattern and other markings.

### Native Habitat

Uroplatus are native to the island of Madagascar. This island is known for its rich biodiversity and unique array of flora and fauna. Within Madagascar, Uroplatus geckos inhabit various regions, including rainforests, dry deciduous forests, and montane forests, and coastal scrublands. Madagascar's diverse habitats provide Uroplatus geckos with a wide range of microhabitats and food sources. Their ability to blend in with their surroundings and remain hidden from predators has allowed them to thrive in these unique ecosystems.

### Enclosure and Housing

Leaf Tailed Geckos are nocturnal and are highly active at night. They thrive best in arboreal bioactive setups. Provide live plants and lots of sticks and branches for climbing and hiding during the day. Smaller species prefer thinner sticks while the larger species need more sturdy sticks to hold their weight. Cork bark/branches are excellent addition to their terrariums. Use loose, moist forest substrate such as reptisoil, ABG or arcadia substrates with sphagnum moss in parts to help maintain humidity levels along. Leaf litter should be added to over the soil to add nesting sites and further enrichment. Enclosure size will vary anywhere from 12x12x18 for smaller species like *phantasticus*, *ebenau*, and *fiera*, to 18x18x24 for *sikorae*, *sameiti*, *guentheri*, all the way up to 36x18x26 for the much larger *fimbriatus*, *lineatus*.

### Recommended Plants

- Ficus benjamina
- Alocasia spp.
- Dieffenbachia
- Syngonium spp
- Coleus spp.
- Snake plants
- Spider plants
- Pothos spp.
- Umbrella plants
- Monstera spp.
- Nerve plants

### Size

*Uroplatus fimbriatus* and *lineatus* can reach 10-14in while the *U. phantasticus* and *ebenau/fiera* stay smaller at about 3-5in. *U. sikorae* and *sameiti* are generally in the 6-8in range.

### \*Note\*

Uroplatus geckos, like many reptiles, have specific dietary requirements, including calcium and vitamin supplementation. Failure to provide adequate calcium and vitamin levels can lead to a condition known as "calcium/vitamin crash" or metabolic bone disease (MBD). Gut loading as well as the proper supplement regiment is key to keep a healthy gecko, especially in the case of females an egg formation. If you notice signs of calcium crash, contact the breeder or the closest exotic vet for any advice or assistance.

### Feeding and Nutrition

I recommend feeding every other day. For newly hatched *U. phantasticus*, *ebenau* and *fiera*, babies can be started off of 1wk crickets as soon as they are born and gradually go up to 3wk crickets as adults. *U. sikorae*, *fimbriatus*, *lineatus*, *sameiti* and other larger species can be fed 2wk crickets from hatch and move up to 4/5wk crickets as adults as well as roaches (Discoids are the only legal ones) as a better/nutritious feeder. Dust the crickets every 2-3 feedings with the appropriate calcium and vitamin supplements. I use the Arcadia Earth Pro line of supplements and I find they are the most complete.

### Temperature/Lighting

Use a full spectrum of T5 UVB for 10-12 hours a day. UVB bulbs lose effectiveness and must be replaced every 8-10 months. I personally recommend the Arcadia T5 6% or 2.5% Shadeweller kits. Maintain a temperature of about 18°C(65°F) at night and a temperature of 20-22°C (low-mid 70°F) during the day. They can handle temps down to 55°F but should not exceed 80°F for long periods of time. Room temperature is a good ballpark to shoot for.

### Humidity

The enclosure should be well ventilated and well misted to keep the humidity at 65%-85% with the higher end being at night. However depending on the species range, try to get to a similar humidity as the terrain.

