



Standing's Day Geckos

Phelsuma standingi

INTERMEDIATE · 9–11 IN ADULT · 10–20 YR LIFESPAN · DIURNAL · ARBOREAL · CITES II

The day gecko for keepers who want a display animal, not one to handle. Standing's is the second-largest of its genus, a broad-bodied climber from the dry southwest of Madagascar that lives vertical and in daylight. It's fast, its skin tears at a careless grab, and adult males will fight to injury. It's also CITES Appendix II: buy captive-bred, and keep the paperwork.

AT A GLANCE	
Difficulty	Intermediate
Ambient temp	75–85 °F
Basking spot	90–95 °F
Night temp	68–75 °F
Humidity	50–70%
UVB	Low beneficial; 12% T5 at 12 in
Diet	Omnivore: insects, fruit, CGD
Adult size	9–11 inches
Lifespan	10–20 years



Standing's day geckos are a fixture of the gecko tables at NARBC shows; captive-bred is the only stock worth buying.

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01

A Display Animal, Not a Pet

Day geckos are display animals, and Standing's is the extreme case. Adults are quick, they'd rather leap than be cornered, and their skin is so fragile that a grab can strip it away in sheets. It regrows, but it scars. Catch-and-cup for maintenance; never restrain one by hand. The tail drops too, and grows back blunt and off-color. Sourcing matters as much as handling: this is a CITES Appendix II species, so buy captive-bred from a breeder who can hand you the paperwork.

02

Vertical Space, One Gecko Per Cage

Every stage on the Habitat-OS table is taller than it is wide, and that isn't decoration. Standing's live on trunks and bamboo, so floor space they will never use is wasted space. Front-opening glass or a screen-and-glass hybrid works; a hatchling in an adult cage will simply lose its food. **House adults singly unless you are deliberately breeding.** Two males will fight until one is badly hurt, and a pushed pair leaves a stressed female with nowhere to go.

STAGE	MINIMUM	PREFERRED	NOTES
Hatchling	8×8×12	12×12×18	UVB from day one. Fruit flies and pinhead crickets.
Juvenile	12×12×18	18×18×24	Larger than most Phelsuma juveniles; upgrade quickly.
Subadult	18×18×24	24×18×36	Males territorial; house singly unless breeding.
Adult	24×18×36	36×24×48	Second-largest day gecko; tolerates 50–70%. Strong 12% T5 at 12 in. CITES II, CB only.

Enclosure minimums and preferred sizes follow Habitat-OS life-stage guidance; height matters more than floor space at every stage.

03

Heat & Light

Give a clear gradient. Ambient air sits at 75–85 °F, with a basking surface near the top of the cage at 90–95 °F and a night drop to 68–75 °F. Basking heat comes from above: a halogen flood aimed at a branch, never a heat rock. UVB is where keepers under-invest. Low output is worth having, and the life-stage guidance goes further: run a 12% T5 HO about 12 inches above the basking branch, sitting on top of the screen. Glass blocks UVB completely and mesh cuts it by a quarter to a half.

04

Humidity & Water

Standing's comes from dry forest, and it shows: 50–70% is the working range, drier than its bigger cousin *P. grandis* is kept. That makes it forgiving in a heated house, but a permanently soaked cage is a mistake, not a kindness. Mist heavily, then let the enclosure dry back before the next round. Most drinking happens off wet leaves and glass, so misting is the real water supply; keep a shallow dish available anyway. Ventilation matters as much as the hygrometer.

05

Furnishing the Height

Furnish for a climber. Bamboo poles and cork tubes wide enough to grip go in first, angled and crossing, reaching from the basking lamp to the shade at the far end. Live plants earn their keep here: pothos, sansevieria and bromeliads hold mist, break sight lines and give a fast animal somewhere to disappear when you open the door. Substrate is for humidity and plants, not for the gecko. A bioactive soil mix over drainage works; skip loose sand entirely.

06

Two Halves of the Diet

An omnivore in the full sense. Insects (crickets, roaches, black soldier fly larvae) build the animal; fruit purees and a prepared crested gecko diet in a shallow dish cover the rest. With the T5 running, dust insects with plain calcium, no D3 and no phosphorus, at most feedings, and a multivitamin weekly while growing, twice monthly for adults. Hatchlings start on fruit flies and pinhead crickets. Pull the wet dish before it ferments. Let body condition set the pace, not the calendar.

07

Health Red Flags

Watch the daily routine first. A diurnal gecko that stops basking, sits on the floor, or goes dull is telling you something days before it looks thin. The killer here is metabolic bone disease, the bill for weak UVB and thin supplementation: tremors, a rubbery or shortened jaw, bowed limbs, trouble climbing. Check toes at every shed; a ring of retained skin takes the toe. Any of that is a reptile-vet visit. MBD does not fix itself.

Husbandry data: Habitat-OS species library. Structure follows the NARBC show handout series. Every animal is an individual - when in doubt, ask the breeder at the table or a reptile veterinarian.