

Recommended Annual Husbandry Schedule

Cachryx alfredschmidti - Campeche spiny-tailed iguana

Identity and habitat

A small arboreal iguana endemic to southern Mexico (Campeche and Quintana Roo). It inhabits lowland dry deciduous forest, usually occupying dead hollow branches and tree cavities. Field animals were found 0.5-6 m above ground, especially in Haematoxylum trees.

Field climate and activity

A 2016 field study captured animals at a mean air temperature of 33.6 C (range 27.2-39.7 C) and mean RH of 53% (range 36.3-85.7%). The species is highly secretive and cavity-dependent, so refuge temperatures and humidity matter more than exposed daytime peaks.

Reproduction and diet

Oviparous. Captive-breeding reviews report 3-7 eggs per clutch. Gravid females were documented in the wild on 4 February, 22 February and 5 April. Adults eat herbs, leaves and fruit with invertebrates; juveniles are markedly more insectivorous during their first weeks.

MONTH	DAY AMBIENT	NIGHT	BASKING	UVI*	PHOTO	RH DAY / NIGHT*	SPRAY / RAIN	FOOD*	STATUS / BREEDING
January	26-29 C	19-21 C	40-42 C	3	11 h 10 m	50-60 / 70-80%	Light local spray 1-2x/wk	3-4	Courtship / mating
February	27-30 C	20-22 C	41-43 C	3-4	11 h 30 m	50-60 / 70-80%	Light local spray 1-2x/wk	4	Gravid females documented
March	28-31 C	21-23 C	42-44 C	3-4	12 h	50-60 / 70-80%	Minimal main cage + moist nest	4	Gravid / nest preparation
April	29-32 C	22-24 C	43-45 C	4	12 h 30 m	50-60 / 70-80%	Minimal + moist lay zone	4	Gravid females documented / likely laying
May	29-32 C	22-24 C	43-45 C	4	13 h	50-60 / 70-80%	Light local spray 1-2x/wk	4	Late dry season / incubation
June	28-31 C	22-24 C	42-45 C	4	13 h 15 m	60-70 / 75-85%	Extensive spray/rain 4-5x/wk	4-5	Wet season / hatching likely
July	28-31 C	22-24 C	42-44 C	4	13 h	60-75 / 75-85%	Extensive spray/rain 4-5x/wk	4-5	Wet-season activity
August	28-31 C	22-24 C	42-44 C	4	12 h 40 m	60-75 / 75-85%	Extensive spray/rain 4-5x/wk	4-5	Wet-season activity
September	27-30 C	21-24 C	41-43 C	3-4	12 h 10 m	60-75 / 75-85%	Extensive spray/rain 4-5x/wk	4-5	Wet-season maintenance
October	27-30 C	21-23 C	41-43 C	3-4	11 h 40 m	60-70 / 75-85%	Rain/mist 3-4x/wk	4	Wet season taper
November	26-29 C	20-22 C	40-42 C	3	11 h 15 m	50-60 / 70-80%	Light local spray 1-2x/wk	3-4	Dry-down / conditioning
December	25-28 C	19-21 C	40-42 C	3	11 h	50-60 / 70-80%	Light local spray 1-2x/wk	3-4	Dry season / pre-breeding

Seasonal trigger: published captive guidance recommends extensive spraying from June-October and substantially drier conditions from November-May. This schedule keeps that natural northern-hemisphere timing.

* RH and spray values are evidence-based captive targets. Published husbandry guidance specifies about 50-60% RH by day and 70-80% at night; the wet season is produced mainly by rainfall frequency, not by permanently saturated substrate.

Thermal rule: published captive guidance uses 28-32 C daytime with up to 45 C directly under the basking lamp. Keep those high temperatures local and ensure hollow refuges and shaded areas remain cooler.

Practical Husbandry and Daily Management

Highly arboreal dry-forest husbandry: tall enclosure, hollow branches, strong basking, moderate atmospheric humidity and a pronounced summer rain pulse.

Enclosure and structure

This species is substantially more arboreal than *C. defensor*. Published German guidance considers 80 x 80 x 120 cm a minimum for one adult; larger is preferable. Provide many vertical/diagonal branches, broad basking limbs, hollow cork tubes and several tight elevated cavities. Do not design it as a ground-dwelling rock iguana enclosure.

Heat, gradient and UVB

Published husbandry guidance recommends 28-32 C daytime with a spotlight reaching about 45 C. In practice, keep that 42-45 C value to one basking surface and preserve shaded cavities in the mid-to-upper 20s C. A measured basking UVI around 3-4 is a practical target, with cavities below UVI 1.

RH, rain and ventilation

Maintain roughly 50-60% RH during the day and 70-80% at night, with excellent ventilation. From June-October increase rainfall/misting strongly; from November-May reduce spraying substantially. The substrate can remain slightly moist enough to suppress dust, but hollow refuges must not become stagnant or moldy.

Nesting

Before March, provide a deep secluded nesting area even though the animal is arboreal. Published guidance warns that inadequate substrate depth can lead to eggs being dropped. Use a deep soil-sand pocket with a lightly moist lower layer plus an elevated cavity containing loose decomposed wood/soil as an additional option.

Adult diet

Use a varied plant-dominant diet: edible weeds, leafy greens, browse, flowers and modest fruit. Published captive guidance also includes locusts, crickets, roaches and other invertebrates. Keep animal prey as a supplement rather than the bulk of the adult diet.

Juvenile diet

Juveniles are reported to be mainly insectivorous during their first weeks. Offer small gut-loaded insects frequently while also presenting tender greens and flowers from the beginning. Increase the plant proportion steadily with age and provide appropriate mineral/UVB support.

Social management

The species is shy and secretive. Individual housing is safest outside planned breeding. For pair introductions, provide multiple high refuges and basking limbs so one animal cannot monopolize the entire vertical space. Separate for persistent pursuit, biting, refuge exclusion, suppressed feeding or weight loss.

Daily keeper checks

Check eyes/nose, grip, toes/tail, climbing ability, appetite, feces, hydration and body mass. Inspect elevated cavities for mold and retained moisture. During February-April, record female abdominal profile, body mass and nest-site use closely because the species produces only a small clutch.

Breeding, Eggs and Evidence Notes

Field gravidity is directly documented in February-April; clutch size and incubation are well supported from captive-breeding compilations.

Wild reproductive timing

The strongest direct field evidence comes from Campeche: four gravid females were captured on 4 February, twice on 22 February, and on 5 April. This supports a late-dry-season reproductive cycle. The January-February mating window and March-April laying window in this schedule are evidence-informed working estimates rather than directly observed fixed dates.

Clutch size

A German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation breeding review reports 3-7 eggs per clutch for *C. alfredschmidti*. The number of clutches per year remains uncertain. Because the species is small, female body condition and calcium balance should be monitored particularly closely.

Incubation

Published husbandry guidance recommends perlite, vermiculite, foam, or a sand-peat mixture, kept moderately moist, at a constant 28-31 C with 90-100% incubation humidity. Avoid excessive free water around eggs; high incubator RH is not the same as saturated medium.

Rainy-season trigger

Captive breeding is stimulated by recreating the seasonal contrast: extensive spraying June-October, followed by significantly drier November-May conditions. If breeding fails despite mature animals, review the annual rainfall cycle before increasing heat or feeding.

Evidence confidence

Taxonomy / distribution - High

Current genus *Cachryx*; Mexico: Campeche and Quintana Roo.

Arboreal habitat - High

Dead hollow branches in lowland deciduous forest, 140-282 m; perches 0.5-6 m.

Field RH / temperature - High

Mean capture air 33.6 C and RH 53%; broad observed ranges published.

Gravid timing - High

Four gravid females directly recorded in February and April.

Clutch size - High-moderate

Captive-breeding review: 3-7 eggs.

Rainfall breeding trigger - High-moderate

Published husbandry: wet June-October, significantly drier November-May.

Incubation settings - High-moderate

Published guidance: 28-31 C, 90-100% RH, moderately moist medium.

Exact mating / laying dates - Moderate

Inferred from gravidity and seasonal cycle; not directly fixed in field data.

Key references

1. Morales-Mavil, Bello-Sanchez & Corona-Lopez (2016), *Herpetological Conservation and Biology* 11:168-176: distribution, arboreal habitat, perch height, gravid dates, field temperature and RH. 2. BfN-Skripten 627 (2022): captive-breeding review, 3-7 eggs, enclosure dimensions, 28-32 C daytime, 45 C basking, 50-60% day / 70-80% night RH, June-October rain trigger and incubation guidance. 3. Malone, Reynoso & Buckley (2017): resurrection of *Cachryx*. 4. Reptile Database: current taxonomy and Mexico distribution.

UVI beneath the optional T5 tube

Cachryx alfredschmidt

Your measuring point

Measure UVI at normal back height directly beneath the brightest accessible part of the optional T5 strip. Place the strip toward the middle/back with free access to and away from it; preserve a gradient into fully covered refuges near UVI 0. These numbers describe the exposure area, not the whole enclosure or a daily average.

Measure and adjust

- 1. Use a UV Index meter.** A Solarmeter 6.5/6.5R or equivalent UVI meter is suitable. Broadband UVB readings in microwatts/cm2 cannot be substituted for UVI.
- 2. Measure the installed arrangement.** Warm the tube for about 30 minutes. Keep the reflector, guards and mesh in their normal positions. With the animal elsewhere, hold the sensor at its normal back height, aimed toward the tube.
- 3. Adjust the fixture.** Begin near the lower part of a newly selected working range and adjust gradually. Respect the lamp manufacturer's minimum distance. Recheck after each change and check every higher accessible branch, rock or platform.
- 4. Keep a full gradient.** Provide usable exposure across the animal's body, lower-UVI areas and fully covered refuges near UVI 0. For daytime baskers, overlap the UV area with visible light and appropriate basking warmth while retaining cooler shade.
- 5. Record and recheck.** Log UVI, measuring point, tube-to-back distance, tube age and lamp-on time. Recheck through the year and after changes to the tube, reflector, mesh or furnishings. Exposure duration and behaviour also determine dose.

A T5 range is a working exposure target, not a whole-cage setting, measured wild monthly average, guaranteed optimum or proven safety ceiling. The animal must be able to enter and leave freely.

Monthly target at normal back height

Month	UVI under T5 when on
January	3
February	3-4
March	3-4
April	4
May	4
June	4
July	4
August	4
September	3-4
October	3-4
November	3
December	3

Retain numbers; clarify measurement

The retained range remains a provisional captive working target. No new species-specific result was found that clearly requires a numerical change. Retaining it is not certification of an experimentally established optimum.

Evidence level: Provisional retention. The seasonal schedule is a captive operating plan; it is not measured wild monthly UV. Off means the existing planned UVB-off/rest phase is preserved. Any staged Off/1 entry still means gradual reintroduction.

UV references: Baines et al. (2016), UV-Tool; Muryn, Baines and Dishman (2026), Reptile Lighting Guide V10. Full rationale and monthly comparison: [UVI_Audit_Report.html](#).