

Recommended Annual Husbandry Schedule

Uromastyx geyri - Geyr's spiny-tailed lizard

Range Central Sahara: the Hoggar/Ahaggar and Air massifs of southern Algeria, northeastern Mali and northern Niger. The species is oviparous and is associated with rocky uplands rather than open sand seas.	Habitat and form Rocky outcrops, wadis and boulder slopes. This is a relatively small Uromastyx, reaching about 35.5 cm total length; adult males may be intensely red-orange or yellow.	Conservation and trade IUCN Near Threatened and CITES Appendix II. Keep acquisition, transfer and breeding records and confirm current national requirements before movement or sale.
---	--	---

Month	Day ambient	Night	Basking surface	UVI	Photoperiod	Lamp hours	Surface / refuge RH	Adult feeding	Seasonal management
Jan	20-22 C	14-16 C	40-44 C	2-3	9 h	5 h	25-35 / 35-45%	1-2 light feeds	Cool, still basking
Feb	22-24 C	15-17 C	44-47 C	3	10 h	6 h	25-35 / 35-45%	2-3 feeds	Warm-up / mating
Mar	25-28 C	17-19 C	48-52 C	4-5	11 h	8 h	20-30 / 30-40%	4-5 feeds	Conditioning / gestation
Apr	28-31 C	19-21 C	50-55 C	5-6	12 h	10 h	20-30 / 30-40%	Daily	Nesting / laying
May	30-33 C	21-23 C	50-55 C	5-6	13 h	11 h	20-30 / 30-40%	Daily	Post-lay recovery
Jun	31-34 C	22-24 C	50-55 C	5-6	14 h	11 h	20-30 / 30-40%	5-6 feeds	Peak summer
Jul	31-34 C	22-24 C	50-55 C	5-6	14 h	11 h	20-30 / 30-40%	5-6 feeds	Peak summer
Aug	30-33 C	21-23 C	50-55 C	5-6	13.5 h	10 h	20-30 / 30-40%	5-6 feeds	Summer / juveniles
Sep	28-31 C	20-22 C	48-52 C	4-5	12.5 h	9 h	20-30 / 30-40%	4-5 feeds	Recovery
Oct	25-28 C	18-20 C	46-50 C	4	11 h	7 h	20-30 / 30-40%	3-4 feeds	Autumn transition
Nov	22-25 C	16-18 C	43-47 C	3	10 h	6 h	25-35 / 35-45%	2-3 feeds	Cooling
Dec	20-22 C	14-16 C	40-44 C	2-3	9 h	5 h	25-35 / 35-45%	1-2 light feeds	Cool, still basking

Operating note: this is a captive-facility starting schedule, not a published species standard. Adjust gradually from measured enclosure temperatures, UVI, body mass, appetite, faecal output and behaviour. The hotspot must always be escapable.

Winter note: published zoo breeding used 14-16 C nights from November to January while retaining daytime heat. Activity and portions fell, but basking and feeding continued; prolonged food withdrawal is therefore not recommended.

Practical Husbandry and Daily Management

A compact Saharan specialist requiring intense light, broad radiant heat, anchored rock crevices and controlled seasonal cooling.

Enclosure, burrow and substrate

Use approximately **150 x 75 x 75 cm or larger for one adult**. Any compatible group needs substantially more space, duplicate resources and immediate separation capacity. Provide **20-30 cm of compactable sand-loam**, with a deeper nesting zone where construction permits.

Combine open ground with boulder-like visual barriers, narrow crevices and at least two secure retreats. Anchor every stone and slab from the enclosure floor before adding substrate so excavation cannot cause collapse. Do not use loose stone piles resting on sand.

Heat, light and UVB

During full activity provide warm-side air around **28-35 C**, a cooler retreat and a broad measured surface around **50-55 C**. The published zoo group bred with 45-50 C basking and rocks occasionally reaching 55 C.

Target **UVI 5-6** at the principal active-season basking position, with complete shade in the burrow and additional areas below UVI 1. The zoo account used UVI 6-8; this protocol begins slightly lower while preserving a strong measured gradient.

Water and humidity

Keep a stable shallow dish of fresh water available and change it daily, especially for gravid and post-lay females. Maintain a dry, well-ventilated surface and one slightly humid deep refuge. Avoid routine whole-enclosure misting; hatchlings may be offered droplets on rocks while drinking behaviour is observed.

Diet and feeding

Base the diet on varied high-fibre leaves, safe weeds and flowers: dandelion, plantain, sow thistle, clover, chicory, endive, escarole, collard, mulberry, hibiscus and similar items. Routine animal protein is unnecessary.

Offer moderate portions **4-5 times weekly** through normal activity and daily during breeding, gravidity and post-lay recovery, adjusted to intake and body condition. The published group became overweight when overfed; reduced portions and frequency improved condition. Use plain calcium as appropriate to diet and measured UVB.

Social management

Treat adults as individually managed unless a stable pair or group has demonstrated compatibility. Male dominance, mounting and biting are documented. Provide multiple spaced basking sites, feeding points and refuges; separate for injuries, persistent chasing, exclusion, suppressed basking or feeding, or declining mass.

Daily keeper checks

Check	Record
Activity	Emergence, basking, digging, retreat use and abnormal hiding
Feeding	Items offered, intake and any food exclusion
Condition	Mass trend, jaw, eyes, skin, tail, feet and faeces
Environment	Hotspot surface, warm/cool air, UVI, burrow stability and water

Veterinary triggers

Seek reptile-veterinary assessment for persistent anorexia, marked weight loss, jaw swelling, weakness, abnormal breathing, repeated unproductive digging, retained eggs, wounds or failure to use heat normally. Quarantine, origin records and faecal screening are prudent for new animals.

Breeding, Nesting and Evidence Review

A published multi-year zoo record provides useful species-specific breeding, incubation and rearing data; retain rigorous individual and clutch records.

Seasonal breeding management

Use November-January mild night cooling followed by a staged February warm-up. In the zoo record, copulation was seen on **21 February**, digging began in mid-April and eleven eggs were laid on **20 April**. Treat these as documented facility dates, not fixed wild dates.

Introduce animals under direct observation and remove either animal immediately if courtship becomes injurious or access to heat, food or refuge is blocked. Gravid females may extend basking and maintain body temperatures around 45-48 C before laying.

Nest provision

Provide a private nesting route before a female appears gravid: a warm chamber or box with at least **15-20 cm** of cohesive, slightly damp substrate, ideally with a deeper 25-30 cm option. In the published record the laying box measured 30 x 20 x 20 cm and ranged from 28-32 C.

Monitor digging remotely and avoid repeated disturbance. After laying, record the female's mass, palpation or imaging findings, hydration, appetite and faeces; provide daily water, heat and generous plant food during recovery.

Eggs and incubation

The published female laid **11 eggs**; three were initially deemed infertile. Clutch size varies and this single result is not a guaranteed range. Very soft eggs require careful transfer without rotation or compression.

The documented incubator setting was **30.5 C** and hatchlings emerged on days **91-96**. The successful later method kept eggs elevated above wet medium to prevent direct water contact. The paper reports fine vermiculite mixed with water at 3:1; reproduce any ratio only by the same measurement method and track egg mass and condensation.

Key references

1. Radovanovic, A. (2020). Husbandry and reproduction of the Saharan spiny-tailed lizard, *Uromastyx geyri*. *Herpetological Bulletin* 152:11-14. doi:10.33256/hb152.1114.
2. Wilms, T.M., Böhme, W., Wagner, P., Lutzmann, N. & Schmitz, A. (2007). On the phylogeny and taxonomy of the genus *Uromastyx* Merrem, 1820. *Bonner zoologische Beiträge* 56:55-99.
3. Uetz, P., Freed, P., Aguilar, R., Reyes, F. & Hošek, J. (eds.). *The Reptile Database: Uromastyx geyri*. Accessed 22 September 2026.
4. CITES. Appendices I, II and III: *Uromastyx* spp.; national trade and record-keeping requirements must be checked before transfer.

Important: This is an evidence-informed working protocol, not a controlled experimental standard. Measure heat and UVI directly, change seasonal parameters gradually, and revise the schedule from documented health and breeding outcomes.

Evidence confidence

Topic	Confidence and application
Taxonomy / range	High: peer-reviewed revision and current reptile database
Habitat / adult size	High-moderate: taxonomic and specialist captive sources
Enclosure / feeding	Moderate-high: published zoo practice plus welfare margin
Captive seasonal table	Moderate: species record plus staged facility adjustments
Clutch / incubation	Moderate-high: multi-year published breeding record

Source corrections applied

The supplied geographic summary was refined to the Hoggar/Ahaggar and Air massifs. Active daytime air was raised into the documented 28-35 C range. The 50-55 C broad basking maximum, winter nights of 14-16 C and continued winter feeding are all consistent with the published zoo record. Substrate depth was increased for digging and nesting.

Record set for every breeding attempt

Individual IDs; dates of seasonal changes; weekly mass; feeding; courtship and mating dates; first digging; laying date and clutch data; egg dimensions and mass; incubator and media details; temperature logger export; fertility; hatch dates; neonatal mass; post-lay recovery and complications.

UVI beneath the optional T5 tube

Uromastyx geyri

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	2-3
February	3
March	4-5
April	5-6
May	5-6
June	5-6
July	5-6
August	5-6
September	4-5
October	4
November	3
December	2-3

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](#).