

Keeping of Bauer's chameleon gecko (*Eurydactylodes agricolae* Rösler 2018) at BION Terrarium Center

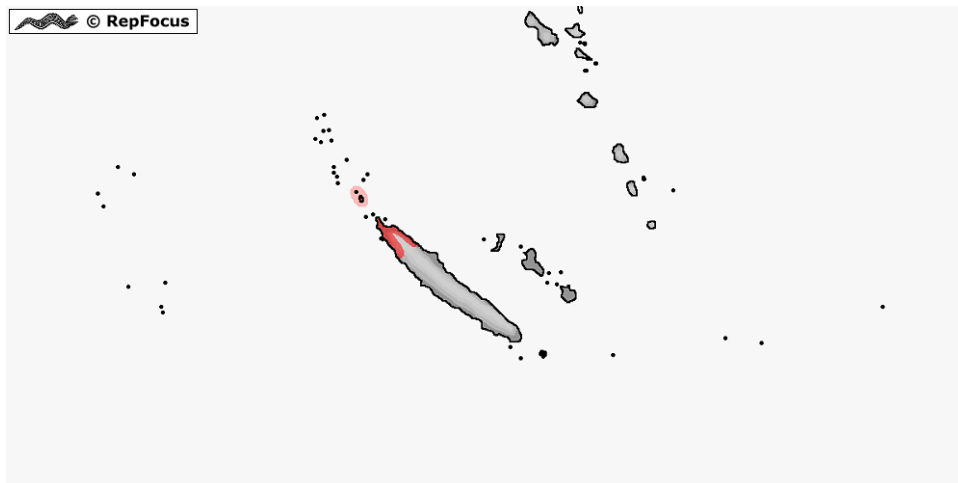
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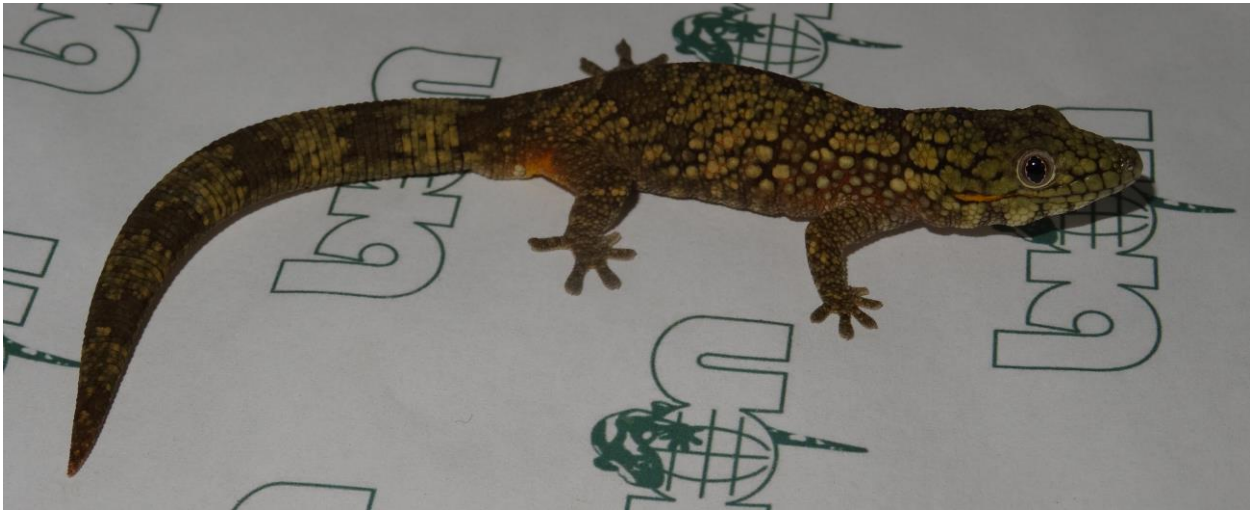
DESCRIPTION, DISTRIBUTION AND BIOLOGY

Eurydactylodes agricolae Henkel & Böhme, 2001 is a species of small sized arboreal geckos of the Diplodactylidae family. This species is endemic to Grande Terre island of New Caledonia being found at the altitudes up to 1,000 m above sea level. It was named in honor of American herpetologist Aaron Matthew Bauer. These geckos are active at dusk and night (Boulenger, 1883).



Current distribution of *E. agricolae* (photo taken from
http://www.repfocus.dk/maps1/TAX/Sauria/Diplodactylidae/Eurydactylodes_agricolae_map.html)

These geckos inhabit shrublands and lower levels of forests hiding in young tree branches, bushes, bark etc. Thanks to their coloration they can easily camouflage among moss and bark. With the help of the chromatophores they are able to get lighter or darker depending on their health, lighting and temperature.



Young male of *E. agricolae*.

Their snout-to-vent length (SVL) is about 6 cm (2.36 in) with the tail being almost equal to the SVL. Total length is about 12-14 cm (4.72-5.5 in). Enlarged head scales are irregular, separated from one another by tiny granules; nape lacks patch of raised tubercles. Body scalation is relatively homogeneous, without enlarged flattened scales. Postorbital and subauricular slits are continuous with one another (<https://reptile-database.reptarium.cz/species?genus=Eurydactylodes&species=agricolae>).

E. agricolae has a solid coloration pattern covering the whole body consisting of olive, dark- or light- or mossy-green colors with conspicuous yellow prolonged spots flanking their mouth and hind and forelimbs. Dark green bands may appear on the back and tail (Bauer et al., 2009; Henkel, Böhme, 2001).

Sometimes *Eu. agricolae* can be misidentified with *Eu. viellardi*. Both of the species have the same coloration patterns that can vary. Both of them also have yellow-orange slit in the mouth corner going all the way up to the ear hole, but in *Eu. viellardi* this slit is partially covered with a skin fold visually “breaking” it into two parts (Nunan, 1993). These geckos have well-developed muscular tail, that is frequently used as a fifth limb for moving. In particular cases these geckos can excrete slimy stinky substance from the glands on their tails as a mechanism of self-defending (Böhme, Sering, 1997). Males can be easily distinguished from females thanks to well-seen hemipenial bulges when being adult or due to presence of yellowish preanal pores in the age of approximately 1 month.

KEEPING AT BION TERRARIUM CENTER

ADULTS

Keeping. *Eurydactylodes* are fairly easy to care for, as they do not have strict housing, temperature, humidity, or feeding requirements. Adults can easily be kept in 30*30*45 cm (11.81*11.81*17.71 in) singly, in pairs or 1:2. Adult males are likely to fight if kept together, so make sure you only have one male per cage. Although, according to our observation, the introducing of the second male for a limited amount of time stimulates mating, although fights occur at the same time. The most important aspect of keeping them is that they should have many climbing vines, branches or plants (living or artificial) with a diameter small enough that they can fully grasp it. Larger branches will not be used as often, so pay close attention to what you choose to climb, keeping in mind that they spend almost 100% of their time on vines and branches. Moist chamber filled with wet coconut substrate is placed inside the terrarium. Animals will use it for shedding or for making and hiding eggs. We use paper towel instead of substrate in other parts of the terrarium. Pieces of bark can also be added to the decoration list.

Lighting & Temperature. These geckos actually like to bask from time to time, so we recommend a small incandescent light bulb on top of the cage during the day. At night, the lights can be turned off completely, taking into account the natural decrease in temperature. A 25-40 watt lamp should be used depending on the ambient temperature in the room and the size of the terrarium. The place for warming up should be the hottest point in the cage, it should reach +27 - +29 °C (80.6 – 84.2 F). Ambient temperature should be +22 - +25 °C (71.6 – 77.0 F) at day and not lower than +20 °C (68.0 F) at night. Make sure you have a good digital thermometer and measure the temperature at the warming point, as well as throughout the cage. Providing temperature gradient in the terrarium is preferable. UVB lighting 5.0 – 10.0 is recommended but not mandatory. If the ambient temperature is high – basking spot is not needed.

Humidity. Humidity level is 70-80%. We do light spraying twice a day allowing the inner decoration to dry out. This is also the source of water for the reptiles. Water dish can be optionally provided.

Diet. We offer insects as well as fruit diets for geckos. Juveniles should be offered either 10-day-old crickets or fruit flies, which should be dusted with calcium powder and D3. They do not like large prey items. Adults eat crickets 0,6 – 1,3 cm (0.23 – 0.51 in) in size or other foods of a similar size (cockroaches). Insect feeding occurs at least 2-3 times a week and fruit puree or baby fruit formula for humans (without sugar) mixes are given 2-3 times a week. Other types of fruit mixes for geckos also work well.

Reference

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