



CAPTIVE CHAMELEON FOOD

GOLDEN RULES

NATURAL

The captive food should resemble the natural food in the wild in size, type, volume, number and nutritional value.

QUALITY

Go for quality feeder rather than for quantity and variety, feed the feeders natural way and with nourishing food.

LESS FOOD

Go for less food to keep your chameleon active and athletic rather than make him obese and ill.

MANY SMALL FEEDERS

Go rather for many smaller feeders than for one big (oversized) one.

GUTLOAD AND DUST

with pollen and dust with supplements, according to recommended schedule every time.

GO SAFE

If in doubt, go safe, do not feed anything what you are not 100% aware of its quality or origin.

SIZE

IDEALLY

Less than head-width at orbits.

NEVER

Longer than jaw.

QUALITY

ALWAYS FEED

Live

Feeders must move, be alive.

Well Nourished

From reliable source or quarantined, well fed and gut-loaded.

Safe

From known, reliable source or self-raised.

Fresh

Feed feeders alive or defrosted frozen ones; never decaying ones.

NEVER FEED

Toxic

Wild hornworms, scorpions, ants, lady bugs, fireflies, hairy caterpillars, black and violet beetles, colorful caterpillars and grasshoppers.

Hard

Hard beetles, crab spiders.

Spiky

Spiky legs of locusts and roaches; shells of roaches, stick insects etc.

Dead

Decaying or with heavy injuries: you can feed freshly killed or defrosted frozen ones.

Artificial

Never feed any artificial mixtures or pellets or granules or dried food designed for other animals.

Protected or Prohibited by Law

STAPLE FOOD

Food to be fed regularly, mainly - according to the size of the chameleon



Banana Cricket

(*Gryllus assimilis*)



House Cricket

(*Acheta domestica*)



Two-Spotted Cricket

(*Gryllus bimaculatus*)



Black Soldier Fly

(*Hermetia illucens*)



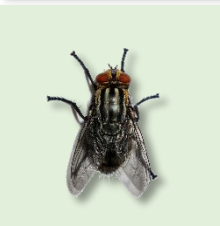
Green Bottle Fly

(*Lucilia sericata*)



House Fly

(*Musca domestica*)



Common Flesh Fly

(*Sarcophaga carnaria*)



Fruit Fly

(*Drosophila sp.*)



Silkworm (Silkmoth)

(*Bombyx mori*)



Waxworm

(*Galleria mellonella*)



Springtail

(*Entognatha*)



Silverfish

(*Zygentoma*)



CAPTIVE CHAMELEON FOOD

CONDITIONAL FOOD

Food to be fed only occasionally and under specific conditions



Desert Locust

(*Schistocerca gregaria*)



Dubia Roach

(*Blaptica dubia*)



Green Banana Roach

(*Panchlora nivea*)



Giant Madagascar Hissing Roach

(*Gromphadorhina portentosa*)

Locusts

Desert Locust (*Schistocerca gregaria*), Migratory Locust (*Locusta migratoria*): feed only nymphs, no adults due to high Phosphorus content and long strong spiky legs.

Roaches, Cockroaches (*Blattodea*)

Dubia Roach (*Blaptica dubia*), Speckled Cockroach (*Nauphoeta cinerea*), Turkestan Cockroach (*Schelfordella tartara*), Green Banana Roach (*Panchlora nivea*), Giant Masagascan Hissing Roach (*Gromphadorhina portentosa*): feed only nymphs, maximum 30% of total volume, do not feed with adults due to high uric acid content, feed roaches with low protein diet.

TREAT FOOD

Food to be fed occasionally only, for variety or specific nutrient content

Land Snail

Some chameleon species (e.g. *Trioceros jacksonii*) feed vigorously on snails.

Small Lizard (Geckos, Anoles, Agamids)

Do not feed protected and endangered species.

Baby Bird (e.g. Zebra-Finch - *Taeniopygia guttata*)

Do not feed protected or endangered species

Mouse (*Mus musculus*)

Small vertebrates should be fed only if not protected or endangered and once per 6-8 weeks only.



Silkworm

(*Bombyx mori*)



Hornworm

(*Manduca sexta*)



Waxworm

(*Galleria mellonella*)



Beetle Larva

(*Pachnoda* sp.)



Stick Insect - Phasmid

(*Phasmatodea*)



Praying Mantis

(*Mantodea*)



Isopod

(e.g. *Porcellio* sp.)



Land Snail

(*Gastropoda*)



Small Lizard

(*Geckoes*)



Mouse

(*Mus musculus*)

Insects

Silkworms (*Bombyx mori*) - caterpillars of the Wax Moth; Hornworms (*Manduca sexta*) - caterpillars of the Hawk Moth; Waxworms (*Galleria mellonella*) - caterpillars of the Wax Moth; Flour-Worms (*Ephestia kuehniella*) - caterpillars of the Mediterranean Flour Moth; Beetle larvae (e.g. *Pachnoda* sp.); Honeybee larvae (*Apis* sp.); Stick insects - Phasmids (*Phasmatodea*); Praying Mantises (*Mantodea*); Isopods (e.g. *Porcellio* sp.).

DESIRED FOOD

Food that should be offered if possible but sometimes hard to get



Honeybee

(*Apis* sp.)



Wasp

(*Apocrita*)

Hymenopterans and Other Pollinators

Bees and wasps are for many chameleon species in the wild the dominant part of their diet, they are used to catch and handle them without being stung.

Due to global bee decline and protection, only discarded parts of the hive incl. larvae, old workers and exiled drones should be fed; caution is advised for allergic people. The flight agility can be lowered if exposing to low temperatures in the fridge. Unused insects can be frozen and fed freshly defrosted, as they do not lose their nutritional value.



CAPTIVE CHAMELEON FOOD

WILD FOOD

Desired food that is to be fed upon availability in case of mitigating risks

Field or Meadow Plankton

Flies (*Diptera*), Hymenopterans (*Hymenoptera*), Grasshoppers, Locusts and close relatives (*Orthoptera*), Praying Mantises (*Mantodea*), Beetles (*Coleoptera*), Butterflies and Moths (*Lepidoptera*), Spiders (*Araneae*), Stink Bugs (*Pentatomoidea*), etc.

Light Trap Plankton

Butterflies and Moths (*Lepidoptera*), Hymenopterans (*Hymenoptera*), Beetles (*Coleoptera*), Praying Mantises (*Mantodea*), etc.

Note: Wild insects should be collected and caught only in organic areas, free of artificial insecticides, pesticides, fertilizers; industrial, chemical, traffic or urban pollution. Protected animals need to be released immediately.



Field or Meadow Plankton



Light Trap Plankton

ACCIDENTALLY OR INTENTIONALLY SWALLOWED SUBSTANCES

To be simulated in the captivity



Dust
(CaCO_3 , SiO_2)



Bee Pollen



Plant Matter

Dust

Mainly CaCO_3 , SiO_2
(simulate with calcium powder).

Bee Pollen

Contamination of the bodies, collected purposefully on bee legs and as gut-load of pollinators.

Plant Matter

Some chameleon species eat leaves, flowers and berries probably as digestion aid; do not put fake plants in the cage, their ingestion is lethal; do not put toxic or harmful plants into the cage.

Fruit nectar, sweet fruit juice

As gut-load of eaten insects.



Substrate (soil, dirt, dead leaves)

Eaten occasionally as digestion aid and minerals intake, avoid presence of coconut soil and fibre and moos (in cages of bigger, non-rainforest species), same as gravel, wood chips and bark chips in the cage, their ingestion is often lethal.

NEVER FEED



Worms

Mealworms (*Tenebrio molitor*), larvae of the Darkling Beetle: often vomited, lead to obesity.

Superworms (*Zophobas morio*), larvae of the Giant Darkling Beetle (too high in Phosphorus).

Butterworms (*Chilecomadia moorei*), larvae of the Chilean Moth: often sterilized by irradiation, causing unspecific discoloration, suspicious.

Any toxic, spiky, hard or doubtful items

Any fruits or vegetables

Any illegal, protected or endangered animals

