

Madagascar for Real



A young *Brookesia decaryi* from dry tropical forest at Ankarafantsika National Park. (David Parks photo)

Besides the familiar colorful and arboreal chameleons, Madagascar has 26 species of small, cryptic, forest-floor-dwelling chameleons of the genus *Brookesia*, including the world's smallest chameleon (with adults even smaller than the juvenile shown here). Note the grasping "hand" with two fingers on one side and three on the other.



Chameleon from remnant southeast coastal forest at Sainte Luce. (David Parks photo)

Madagascar is the world center for chameleons. Its 65 species, none of which are found anywhere else, amount to 2/3 of the planet's total.

Chameleons can use each eye independently, but they bring them both forward to focus on prey.