



FAMILY

CHAMAELEONIDAE

Chameleons are among the most distinctive of all lizards, their strongly compressed bodies, spindly limbs with grasping feet, prehensile tails, and independently mobile eyes set them apart from all other lizards.



The eyes can be moved independently of one another.

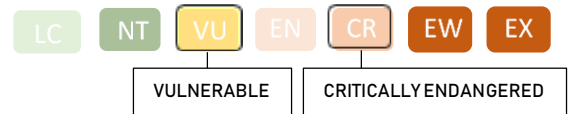
The slow speed of the chameleon not only gives it stability when moving but makes it difficult for both predators and prey to detect.

Despite the slow speed, chameleons are adept at feeding on a variety of prey, from small insects and spiders to birds and small mammals, at least in the larger species.

The chameleon tongue may be as long or longer than the body of the animal. The lightning projection speed of the tongue more than makes up for the slow body movements.

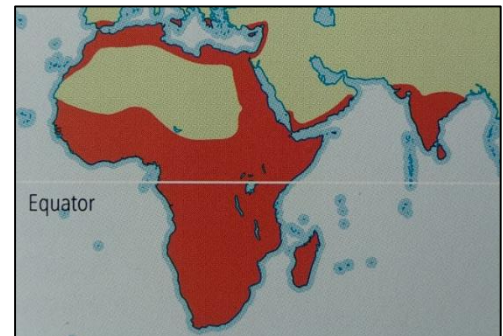
CONSERVATION

One specie (Smith's dwarf chameleon) is critically endangered, while the others are vulnerable.



HABITAT

Chameleons are strictly limited to the Old World. They are especially numerous in sub-Saharan Africa and in Madagascar.



BEHAVIOUR

Chamaeleon can **change color** because they got a set of special cells in their skin and within those cells they have **nanocrystals**, small crystals with different size and shape. The chameleon can rearrange the organization of this crystals so they reflect different lengths of waves of light, creating **different colors**. It's a myth that chameleons **change their colors** just to blend in with their environment, which they do, but the main reason is to express or communicate with other chameleons. For example, when a female is in sight the male express **bright colors** and when there is a territorial dispute with another male the chameleon express that he is angry with **warming colors**.