

## Handsome Gargoyles

**Far from grotesque, *Rhacodactylus auriculatus* can be a great addition to a home.**

*By Loren Pennebaker*

Among the many reptiles that make good pets, few are as hardy, long-lived, personable and rewarding as a gargoyle gecko (*Rhacodactylus auriculatus*). With a little guidance, even people without reptilekeeping experience can have great success with these geckos.

There are several reasons why. First, gargoyle geckos come from New Caledonia, a large island about a 1,000 miles east of Australia. The island enjoys a relatively mild climate year round. Even during the warmer season, temperatures rarely exceed 80 degrees Fahrenheit. As a result, gargoyle geckos prefer mild temperatures. Second, as nocturnal lizards, they don't have the special lighting or heating requirements many reptiles need for good health. Third, though these geckos readily climb many surfaces, they are not particularly quick and usually can be captured without difficulty. Coupled with their amazing resilience to stress, this makes gargoyle geckos relatively easy to handle and train. They might be the perfect pet gecko.

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