

Care & Information Sheet

Leopard Gecko



Leopard Geckos are an easy pet to take care of. They come in a variety of colors and patterns, and have moveable eyelids. The average size is 6 to 9 inches long. They are active during the night and sleep during the day (nocturnal). Keep handling to a minimum as over handling geckos can cause them stress. With proper care and nutrition they can live 20 years or more. Never house two or more male geckos or different species of reptiles together. Leopard geckos have a good disposition

Habitat

- Size – Appropriate sized habitat with a secure lid. A 10-20 gallon tank is recommended for one leopard gecko.
- Provide multiple hiding areas with non-toxic plants, branches, logs, and cork.
- Environment should provide no less than 50% humidity to promote proper shedding
- Temperature – Provide a temperature gradient by placing a heat source on one end of the tank. The temperature should range from 78°F to 88°F with a basking area of 95°F
- Lighting – 10-12 hours of light per day is required; because Leopard Geckos are nocturnal, they do not require UVB lighting like most other lizards. An incandescent bulb can be used for the basking area during daylight hours only. You can use a ceramic heater or a black heat bulb at all hours.
- Thoroughly clean the tank at least once a week. Place gecko in a secure habitat, scrub the tank and furnishings with a 3% bleach solution, rinse thoroughly with water removing all smell of bleach. Dry the tank and furnishings and add clean substrate

Substrate

- Use alfalfa-based pellets or calcium sand. Some geckos may eat their substrate, if they do, select an edible substrate such as alfalfa pellets.

Food & Water

- Provide a variety of insects, including crickets, small mealworms and wax worms; use gut loaded (recently fed) crickets no larger than half the length of the gecko's head.
- Feed juveniles every day; feed adults every other day.
- Dust food with calcium daily and a multi-vitamin supplement once or twice a week.
- Clean, fresh, filtered, chlorine-free water changed daily should be provided in a non tipping shallow bowl.

Grooming and Hygiene

- Geckos regularly shed their skin; ensure humidity of habitat is appropriate to allow proper shedding; a shed box, which is essentially a hide box with damp sphagnum moss, is a good idea as this will aid in the shedding process.

Supplies

Tank with Lid	Shallow Food Dish	Fluorescent Light
Substrate	Meal Worms & Crickets	Under Tank Heater
Hiding Box or Log	Calcium & Vitamin Supplements	Thermometer/Humidity Gauge
Shallow Water Dish	Non toxic plants & branches	Book about Geckos

Health

Because all leopard geckos are potential carriers of infectious diseases, always wash your hands before and after handling your gecko and/or the habitat contents to help prevent the potential spread of diseases.

You should consult with an exotic animal veterinarian if you observe any of the following conditions.

- Gastro-Intestinal Disease – runny stools, caked or smeared stool around the vent area, and loss of appetite caused by a bacterial or parasitic infection.
- Metabolic Bone/Vitamin Deficiency – If untreated, can lead to deformities and softened bones. Swollen limbs and lethargy.
- Respiratory Disease - Labored breathing with bubbly secretions around mouth and nose. This can be caused by cold temperature. Ensure that the habitat is at the appropriate temperature.

For information regarding leopard geckos and disease, contact Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets>

NOTE: The information contained in this document is for general reference only. Please consult a veterinarian for medical advice and concerns.

Sources: Leopard Geckos: Identification, Care, and Breeding by Ray Hunziker
The Guide to Owning a Leopard Gecko by Ray Hunziker