



Leopard Gecko

Eublepharis macularius

The leopard gecko, a native of Pakistan, is a gentle, hardy, long-lived animal that is in many ways a perfect reptile pet. The leopard gecko reaches an overall length of 7-10 inches, and has been known to live over 20 years. They are now being captive-bred in a wide variety of color and pattern morphs. One of the most notable traits about leopard geckos, which has led to their great popularity, is their unusually gentle disposition.

Leopard geckos naturally inhabit arid regions, such as sparse grasslands and rocky deserts. They are nocturnal, emerging at dusk from holes and crevices to hunt for food. They can be kept (and do well) as single animals, but can also be kept in small groups, provided there is no more than one male per group.



Juvenile Leopard Gecko

Basic Care:

Habitat: The cage setup for leopard geckos can be as simple or elaborate, as you like. A single gecko can be housed in a 10-15 gallon terrarium. Substrate choice can vary, but many keepers choose paper towel/newspaper or reptile carpet, to facilitate cleaning. Leopard geckos will choose one corner of their cage to relieve themselves, which makes cleanup easy. Particulate substrates such as sand or gravel should be avoided, as some geckos will ingest pieces while hunting or searching for calcium, which can lead to intestinal impactions. Hiding places should be provided at both the warm and cool ends of the enclosure, as well as a damp hide filled with moist moss or peat, to aid the gecko in shedding. If a moist area for shedding is not provided, the shed skin may remain on the toes or tail and constrict blood flow, eventually resulting in the loss of toes or tail tips. You may also mist the cage occasionally to raise the humidity, which will also help your gecko shed properly. A shallow water dish should be available at all times. Daytime basking temperatures should be in the mid 80's, with a thermal gradient ranging down into the mid 70's. Nighttime temperatures can drop into the low 70's. Heat can be provided with conventional heat lamps or pads, or a combination of the two.

Diet: Leopard geckos are insectivorous, and do well on a diet of appropriately sized crickets and mealworms. Wax worms can be given occasionally as a treat, but should not be used as a major part of the diet as they are fairly fatty. Start with a feeding schedule of once daily or every other day. Babies seem to prefer to chase their meals, adults will eat mealworms out of a shallow dish. Food should be offered in the evening, when the geckos are most active. Insects should be lightly dusted with a calcium/mineral supplement, such as Rep-cal or Miner-all.