



Leopard Gecko *Eublepharus macularius*

- Unlike most other geckos, leopard geckos have moveable eyelids and are mainly terrestrial (ground dwelling). They lack adhesive toe pads.
- Leopard geckos are nocturnal, and inhabit south central Asia.
- Medium to large sized gecko with lumpy yellowish skin and many black to chocolate brown spots and blotches giving them the name “leopard” gecko. Also has bluish to purplish bands across the back and tail that is more prominent in juveniles.
- Leopard geckos have a thick fleshy tail that used to store fat.
- If provided the proper care, leopard geckos can attain longevity of 10-12 years or more.

Size

Ranges from 3 ½ -4 ½ inches as hatchlings, and 8-10” as adults.

Housing

Housing must be sealed and escape proof. Provide a 10-15 gallon terrarium or enclosure. Leopard geckos can be maintained on newspaper, paper towel, reptile carpet, or play sand substrate. Calcium Sand is not recommended due to its particle size. Provide a hide box and artificial foliage, driftwood, rocks, or logs for ample basking and hiding opportunities. For moisture, provide a small bowl or dish of fresh water 2-3 times per week and mist once to twice weekly.

Create a thermal gradient (or a warm side) in the cage/enclosure with an appropriate sized under tank heating pad, ceramic, or radiant heat emitter. Ideal temperatures for leopard geckos range from 75-80 degrees F on the cool side and 88-90 degrees F on the warm, basking side. Leopard geckos are primarily nocturnal and do not require overhead UVB lighting.

Spot clean the enclosure for urates, feces, or uneaten food at least twice per week. Be sure to periodically replace the substrate, clean, and disinfect the enclosure and its furnishings at minimum every 2-3 months.

Feeding/Diet

In the wild, leopard geckos are primarily insectivorous, meaning they eat insects and other invertebrates.

In captivity, feed leopard geckos crickets, mealworms, superworms, roaches, and waxworms. Gut load these prey items by feeding them commercially available diets for added nutritional value. Leopard geckos may eat pinky mice as well, but feed them these sparingly, if at all. Feed them these insects in a bowl or dish every other day.

Provide calcium and vitamin D3 supplements in leopard gecko diets whenever possible.

Handling

Many leopard geckos are generally tolerant of moderate levels of handling and interaction even as juveniles. Handle your gecko gently and deliberately, but do not drop or injure the animal. Do not grab your gecko by its tail or it may detach if they perceive you as a predator or threat. Most adult leopard geckos will settle down considerably and become quite docile and easily handled. Allow them to walk in between or from hand to hand.

Also be sure to practice basic cleanliness and hygiene associated with proper husbandry after touching or handling any animals or animal enclosures to prevent the possibility of contracting salmonellosis or any other zoonotic pathogens