

LEOPARD GECKO - CARE SHEET

The Leopard Gecko is found in the arid grasslands of Pakistan and India. It normally grows to between 6 and 8 inches long. They will become quite tame with handling and make excellent pets. When choosing a Leopard gecko make sure that the eyes and skin are clear, it has a robust body and that it is alert, active and responsive.

Housing

A 30" x 15" x 15" vivarium will house up to 3 geckos. The more geckos you keep the bigger the tank must be. Full spectrum lighting is not essential as geckos tend to hide up in the day and are more active at night. A 60 watt coloured bulb should be enough to heat the above tank to a basking area of about 87 – 90 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and then bring the temperature down to between 70 and 75 degrees Fahrenheit for the night. This can be controlled by use of a dimmer switch or a dimmer thermostat. You will also need a thermometer inside the cage. Bark makes an excellent substrate to put on the bottom of your tank and once they are older you can use a reptile sand.

Geckos like places to hide so kit out your tank with some rocks and artificial plants, which will give them a choice of hides.

A shed/hide box with a hole at the side for entry/exit and filled with moist vermiculite is ideally placed at the cooler end of the tank and is excellent for aiding the gecko to shed their skin. Make sure to keep this box moist, so give it a spray each day.

Small water bowl for drinking.

Feeding

Leopard Geckos like crickets; this is their main diet. Make sure that the crickets you feed are not too big for the animal to handle. A good measure is to feed crickets, which are no bigger than the size of the gecko's head.

Prior to feeding your gecko you will need to gut load the crickets, which means, feed the crickets up so that they have some goodness to give the gecko once eaten. Things that can be used are orange slices, vegetables; tropical fish flakes and dried dog food. Feed the crickets 12 – 24 hours before you feed the gecko. You will need to dust the crickets with a calcium supplement prior to feeding. For young geckos you will need to feed twice daily and dust at every other feed and then from about 6 – 7 months old reduce it to twice weekly.

Only feed as many crickets that can be eaten in a 10 – 20 minute period, otherwise you will have a lot of crickets running around the cage and it has been known for crickets to damage sleeping geckos. Other insects that appeal to the gecko are mealworms, but only feed these about once a week,

as they are not especially nutritious. It is advisable to snip/pull the head off the mealworm prior to feeding and offer them in a small shallow bowl. Wax worms are another favourite but only use these as a treat and feed them no more than about 2 or 3 each week. Once the gecko has reached adult size then feeding them a 'pinkie' (day old mouse) once a week will also help to keep them nice and healthy.

General Information

Always handle your gecko with care, especially the tail. This is the gecko's defence mechanism and if pressure is applied to the tail then it can drop off. A new tail will grow again but will never be as nice or as long as the original.

Never keep two males together as they can fight, especially if there is a female around.

Spend time getting to know your gecko, don't just watch, really observe as they will keep you fascinated for hours