



The basic care of

LEOPARD GECKOS

(*Eublepharis macularius*)

Natural range

Leopard geckos are found in Pakistan, Afghanistan, north western India and most reptile shops!.

Description

Leopard geckos can reach a length of up to 8 inches, and are usually yellow with black spots in any pattern (although morphs are available such as Albino, Hypo (reduced black) and Patternless).

Males are larger than females and can be distinguished by preanal pores near the vent (anus) and hemipenial swellings at the base of the tail. Although adults are easy to tell apart with these methods, babies are much more difficult and cannot be guaranteed.

As with all reptiles Leopard Geckos are cold blooded and require heating.

Captive conditions

A single adult will require a cage that is 20 inches long and a pair of geckos a cage that is 24 inches long (these are minimum Guidelines). Juveniles will need a smaller cage so they can find food, water and shelter easily.

A substrate of coco fibre (dried out) or natural sand works well, but as with any substrate there is the possibility of impaction. Babies may fare better on paper towels until they are 6 inches in length.

Heating should be provided by a heatmat connected to a thermostat set to 88 degrees F to prevent overheating. The heatmat should cover about a 1/3 of the floor area so the gecko can choose his desired temperature. Temperatures should also be monitored by a thermometer.

Two hides should be provided, one at the warm end and one at the cool end so the gecko will not have to choose between heat and cover. An additional hide may need to be provided and kept moist to help the gecko shed its skin.

Clean water should always be available at the cool end for the gecko to drink.

Feeding

Leopard Geckos can be fed on a variety of insect such as crickets and mealworms, these should be fed fresh veg and fruit to ensure there nutritional value and also dusted with calcium powder five times a week and a good quality calcium and vitamin D3 powder twice a week.

Size of prey should be judged by being no more than the length and less than half the width of the geckos head.

Leopard Geckos should be fed every day as babies and every two to three days as adults (unless breeding or underweight etc). Amount should be tailored to the geckos needs and if there are crickets running around after fifteen minutes quantity should be reduced.

Common problems

Mature male leopard geckos should never be kept together as they will fight and injure each other. It is also worth mentioning that if a male and female are kept together sooner or later they will start breeding.

Gut impaction is also a problem if substrate is used. One way to try to stop this is to always have a dish of calcium and vitamin powder available to the gecko. If your gecko persistently eats their substrate then they should be kept on paper towels and checked over by a reptile vet.

Tail loss can occur if the gecko is handled roughly and though they will grow it back it is stressful for the animal and will never look the same as the original.

Shedding problems can occur if the humidity is kept to low and can be helped by the provision of a moist hide.

Leopard geckos can be prone to several health problems and it is advised the keeper buy a book and read up on these to know what to look for.

Disclaimer- A&J Reptiles accepts no responsibility for any damage sustained from following this advise. All responsibility lies with the owner.