

Geckos Including Arid, Tibetan & Leopard Geckos

Scientific Name: Hemidactylus Frenatus

Brief Description:



With over seven-hundred fifty species of Gecko's, in a variety of colors and an interesting skill set that has the Gecko walking upside down, on vertical surfaces, it's no wonder that they are popular and great first-time pets.

Average Size: Hatchlings are approximately two inches. Adults average between six and nine inches. The maximum size is about twelve inches.

Average Life Span: The average Gecko lifespan is about twenty-years

Feeding:

Feeding your carnivorous pet Gecko, is a relatively simple task with just a few key items to keep in mind, while doing so.

- Gecko's thrive on a diet of crickets and mealworms.
- Keeping Gecko's size in mind, younglings should be fed small crickets and mealworms.
 - o Young Gecko's can be fed every other day.
- Mature Gecko's should be fed adult crickets and mealworms.
- For both young and mature Gecko's feed them as much as they can take in one sitting.
- Be sure to remove an uneaten food items within a short time of feeding.
- Let Crickets roam free in enclosure while providing a small dish for mealworms
- Make fresh water availbale, at all times, in a wide, shallow dish.

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Housing:



Keeping healthy Gecko pets is critical and their enclosure should not be overlooked under any circumstance. Keep in mind that the enclosure size should be proportional to the number of Gecko's you decide to keep and regular maintenance-times will vary depending how much "stuff" you include as decorations and the number of pet's you keep. We've also included some additional details to help facilitate your decision making and maintenance routine.

- Acceptable enclosures include:
 - o Rubbermaid plastic sweater box
 - o Melamine racks
 - o Freedom Breeder cage
 - o Plastic-type reptile cages such as those from Vision Herp or similar
 - o Glass aquarium and tanks
- Enclosure must allow for adequate thermal gradient that the lizard can utilize
- Cage size should be proportional to the number of Gecko's kept - a ten gallon tank, is suitable for one Gecko.

NOTE:

NEVER house more than one male leopard gecko in the same enclosure! Males of this species are extremely territorial & will fight extensively, causing injury or even death to a rival male.

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Maintenance:



Gecko's, other than being great pet's, are relatively clean and their enclosure, easy to maintain. Keep reading to learn some easy maintenance tips to help keep your Gecko happy and their environment, healthy.

- Spot clean your Gecko's enclosure as necessary.
- Remove feces, urates and any uneaten prey items as soon as possible.
- Gecko's typically choose one corner to defecate so line this spot with paper towel for easy replacement.
- Clean and disinfect water bowl on a weekly basis.
- Every thirty days, remove all substrate and cage furniture for a deep, disinfecting clean.
- Rinse all items and enclosure prior to returning your pet Gecko

Temperatures and Heating:

Gecko's are from warmer climates so be sure to provide your pet Gecko with a toast habitat, similar to that of his or her origins. We can easily accomplish with the right hardware and some know how. Below you find some details for creating the perfect environment for your pet.

- Never guess the temperature inside your Gecko's enclosure.
 - o Using a digital indoor/outdoor thermometer place it inside the cage at the cool end and place the probe on the warm end, for accurate readings.
- Your Gecko will need a basking spot of eight-five to eighty-eight °F.
- Your Gecko will need an ambient temperature of seventy-eight to eighty °F.
 - o Ambient temperature should not fall below seventy-five °F.
- Several good options are available for heating your pet's enclosure.
 - o Using under-cage heating pads, ceramic heat emitters and basking bulbs.

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Humidity Levels

Certain humidity levels are an absolute must in so Gecko can thrive in a dry environment, providing a humidity chamber is necessary to assist your Gecko in shedding properly. Here's how we accomplish this:



- Use a plastic container and pack it with damp sphagnum moss, wrung out like wash cloth.
- Carefully extract a hole in the plastic container along the top or side, then place it in the enclosure.
- Pete moss or vermiculite may also be used in place of sphagnum.
- Check box a couple of times a week to gauge moisture level
- Spray the moss within the box to keep it damp
- Moisture provided by this box will help your Gecko shed
- Check your box a few times a week which is critical to help your Gecko shed his or her skin.

NOTE:

Leopard geckos, like many other gecko species, eat their shed skin & leave very few remnants of the shed within the enclosure. Make sure that you check your gecko's toes and the end of its tail to ensure that all old skin was removed during the shed. Skin that is stuck to the toes or tail tip can eventually restrict blood supply to these areas, resulting in tissue death.

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Lighting:

Lighting setup of your pet Gecko is very easy and straight forward. Just keep the following information in mind and you should be fine.



- Supplemental lighting is not necessary as Geckoes' are nocturnal.
- We recommend red night bulbs for night viewing of your pet.
 - o Red bulbs double as a warm spot in your Gecko's cage.

Accessories:

The key to happy a Gecko comes through many means such as fresh water, food, a clean cage and a basking light. However, your Gecko will love some accessories as well. Keep reading for some insightful information.

- Gecko's are somewhat secretive lizards that appreciate and utilize hide spots.
- Provide a couple of hide box's for your pet, one at each end the enclosure.
 - o This is ideal strategy as they don't have to choose between temperature and security.
- Cork bark slabs make for attractive heading spots.
- Clay flowerpots, plastic trays, commercial hide boxes are excellent choices.
- Gecko's love "naturalistic" vivarium and will likely not trash their enclosure.

Petware
House

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Reproductive:



- Sexual maturity at around eighteen months of age.
- Gecko's should be in optimal health before attempting to breed them.
- To help induce Gecko's into breeding, follow these tips:
 - o Reduce daytime photoperiod to eight hours.
 - o Drop nighttime temperature to seventy °F, for four-to-six weeks.
 - o Do not feed them during this time.
- o After cooling period, slowly increase temperature, to normal level, over several days.
- o Male Gecko's can breed with one or more females and kept in the same cage. Allow for sufficient space.
- o Gravid females are easy to spot by looking at the underbelly for the presence of eggs.
- o Egg laying chambers should be placed on the warm side of the enclosure.
- o Check eggs for fertility with a small flashlight. Fertile eggs give off a pinkish glow while demonstrating a network of blood vessels.
- o Incubate eggs in slightly-moist vermiculite for sixty-to-seventy days.
- o Incubated eggs in the low eighty °F should produce mostly female babies.
- o Incubated eggs in the eighty-eight to ninety °F range produce mostly male babies.

Notes and Comments:

Geko's are by far one of the most loved reptile pets and favored by many hobbyists. Their availability in a wide-range of colors and pattern morphs, docile nature, and ease of care make them an attractive candidate for both the beginner and advanced herper alike.