



Jungle Bob's Care Sheet

Leopard Geckos

(*Eublepharis macularius*)

General Information

Leopard Geckos are hardy (reaching 20-25 years of age), easy to handle, breed readily, and content with modestly-sized terrariums...no wonder they are the world's most popular pet lizard!

The Leopard Gecko is found in southeastern Afghanistan, western India, Pakistan, Iraq, and Iran. It inhabits desert fringes and brushy grasslands in regions of wildly-fluctuating temperatures.

Leopard Geckos reach 8-12 inches in length, and are various shades of yellow in color. Black spots mark the bumpy skin. Youngsters are banded in yellow and brown. A startling array of color morphs have been established by breeders. The Leopard Gecko and its relatives are the only geckos to have movable eyelids (the eyelids are fused into a transparent cap in other species).

Males are typically larger than females. The most reliable method to sex Leopard geckos is to look for enlarged preanal pores. These pores are located on the underside of the gecko and are just above the vent. Males' preanal pores are darker and more noticeable when compared to a female. Another characteristic present in males is enlarged hemipenial bulges, which are located below the vent at the base of the tail. If you're unsure of the sex of your Leopard gecko, bring it in and we'll be happy to sex it for you.



Housing

A single adult may be kept in a 10 gallon aquarium, but a larger tank is preferable. Reptile sand works well as a substrate, and rarely causes impactions. However, it is best to provide food in large bowls so that substrate ingestion is limited. The clumsy hatchlings tend to swallow substrate, and so are best kept on washable cage liners.

Leopard Geckos do not need a UVB light source, as they absorb Vitamin D3 from their diet. They fare best at a temperature gradient of 78-85 F and with a basking temperature of 88-90 F. Large enclosures will allow your pets to thermo-regulate by moving from hot to cooler areas. The substrate must remain dry, but a cave stocked with moist sphagnum moss, as well as a dry shelter, should be provided. A [sub-tank heat pad, ceramic heater](#) or [red/black reptile night bulb](#) should be used to maintain temperatures after dark, when Leopard Geckos are most active.

Diet

Your gecko's diet should contain a wide variety of invertebrates, including crickets, roaches, silkworms, hornworms, calci-worms and other commercially-available species. Insects should themselves be provided with a nutritious diet for 1-3 days before being offered to your pets. Mealworms have been linked to intestinal blockages, and therefore are best avoided or used only when recently-molted (white in color). A pink mouse may be provided every 4-6 weeks, especially for breeding females, but over-use may cause kidney and liver ailments. Do not use fuzzies or adult mice, as the fur may cause intestinal impactions.

Leopard Geckos also need a calcium and vitamin supplement. A [Calcium/VitaminD3 supplement](#) should be used on all meals offered to babies and reduced to 3-4 times per week for adults. A vitamin/mineral powder should be employed 2-3 times weekly.

Cleaning and Handling

The terrarium should be cleaned as necessary, with fecal matter and left over food being removed daily. The substrate should be completely changed once each month. The inside of the terrarium can be cleaned out with an appropriate reptile cage cleaner: we recommend [Natural Chemistry's Healthy Habitat](#).

Leopard Geckos accept gentle handling readily, but like all lizards will defend themselves by biting if handled roughly. Always wash your hands before and after handling any animal.

Fun Fact

Leopard Gecko ears are unusual in that, when viewed at certain angles, you can look in one and see right out through the other!

Jungle Bob's Reptile World
984 Middle Country Rd. - Selden, NY 11784
www.JungleBobsReptileWorld.com

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