

Common Name: Leopard gecko	Scientific Name: <i>Eublepharus macularius</i>
Class: Reptilia Order: Squamata Family: Gekkonidae	Feeding Type: Insectivore Statistics: Length: up to 10 in. Weight: 30 – 50 g

DESCRIPTION: The leopard gecko has black spots covering a brown to yellow body, and a ringed tail with multiple colors, noticeably darker than the rest of its body. Young may be more colorfully marked, being ringed from head to tail. It has relatively large eyes and noticeable ear holes.

RANGE: Northwest India, Pakistan and most of Asia Minor

HABITAT: Varied, but generally dry, rocky areas. It is almost never found far from the ground.

ADAPTATIONS: Long, stilt-like legs allow leopard geckos to move quickly to capture prey and escape predators. Like many other lizards, leopard geckos can detach their tails when stressed. Since leopard geckos cannot climb walls, they use their speed to catch prey.

Geckos are one of the only reptiles to make a true vocalization. During breeding season you may hear one call out "gecko, gecko." A gecko without a tail is considered lower class to those with original tails. Only geckos with original tails usually breed, to make sure the smartest animals survive.

Leopard geckos are nocturnal, so generally are not active during the day. Because of this, they do not require the same UV light as other reptiles to synthesize vitamins properly. During the day, they generally hide under logs, rocks, or any other shade-providing structure.

REPRODUCTION/GROWTH: One male gecko will breed with two to six females from January to April. Two eggs are laid at a time, perhaps three to four times in a month, and the eggs hatch after a 47 to 100-day gestation. Females may lay ten to 16 eggs each season. Fertile eggs feel like stale marshmallows, while infertile eggs look and feel like half-filled balloons. Sexual maturity is reached at ten months, and females stop being reproductive at eight years of age.

Males have a larger, thicker neck region than females, and a line of small pores on the belly between the hind legs just in front of the anal opening, or vent, which are missing in females. Females are also generally smaller.

Gecko eggs are temperature dependent. If daytime temperatures do not exceed 82 degrees Fahrenheit, females will be born. When daytime temperatures are between 90 and 92 degrees F, males will be born. However, if eggs are kept between 90 and 92 for over two weeks, non-fertile females will be born, or the embryos may die from heat stress.

LONGEVITY: up to 20 years

PREY/PREDATOR: Prey to larger carnivores
Predator to insects

DIET: WILD: Insects
SZ: Crickets

STATUS: Geckos are widespread, adaptable, and pose no threat to humans. Most species are not endangered.

SPECIAL NOTES: You can never house more than one adult male gecko in the same enclosure, but up to ten females may be kept together, depending on the size of the enclosure. Males are very aggressive and will fight each other to the death. A male will vibrate its tail rapidly when it sees another gecko; if the other gecko vibrates its tail in the same fashion, each of them knows contact has been made with another male and they will fight. If, however, a male signals his presence via tail shaking and the other gecko does not respond in like fashion, the male knows that the gecko near him is a female.

Geckos generally pick one corner of an enclosure to use as a bathroom, which makes it easier to keep clean.

Geckos in general are thought to bring good luck to the household in which they reside. They are often released in houses to help control or eliminate the insect population.



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