

Leopard Gecko

Hemel Hempstead

Welwyn Garden City

Lifespan: 15- 20 years

Average size: approx 20cm in length

Natural Habitat: Arid Desert

General Information

Leopard geckos come from the dry areas of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Southern India. They are one of the easiest lizard species to keep and easy to handle. This makes them great pets for older children.

Feeding

Leopard geckos are insectivores and require a diet made up of crickets, small locusts and occasionally mealworms.

Waxworms should be fed sparingly due to their high fat content. Pinkie mice can also be offer very occasionally (once a month) as a protein boost. Young leopard geckos should be fed every day. Adults should be fed 4-5 times a week. Each leopard gecko will require 3-5 insects per feed at about the size of the width of its head. Any uneaten food should be removed readily. Live crickets can annoy and distress leopard geckos.

Leopard geckos will also require a calcium supplement. Nutrabal supplement should be dusted onto the insects for every feed to ensure that your leopard gecko gains the correct levels of calcium in their diet. Fresh water should constantly be available within a shallow dish. This should be changed daily to ensure that it is kept fresh.

Housing

A good sized, escape proof vivarium with good ventilation is the most suitable housing for a leopard geckos. The minimum vivarium size for a leopard gecko should be a 45cm length vivarium. However, a 60cm length vivarium will offer a lot more more space and give your gecko a better quality of life. If kept in groups, more space will be required. Two males should not be housed together in the presence of females due to fighting taking place.

Temperature: All reptiles are cold blooded and need an external heat source to maintain their body temperature. Each species of lizard will require different degrees of heating. By heating one end of the vivarium, this will allow a temperature gradient and allow your leopard gecko to choose its ideal temperature. Heat can be provided by using a heat mat. The heat mat should be left on constantly to provide a gentle heat source. This should be adequate to hold a temperature to about 24-26 oc. A heat mat should cover about a third of the vivarium floor. All temperatures can be controlled by a thermostat if required. The vivarium temperature can drop to 18 oc at night.

Lighting: Leopard geckos are nocturnal and gain all the Vitamin D3 (UV) from their diet. However, they will still require a light source, provided as a florescent tube or spot bulb. They should be given access to light for 10-12 hours per day.

Humidity: Leopard geckos will require a humid nest box to increase humidity if require when shedding. This should be filled with damp sphagnum moss or vermiculite. Low humidity can lead to toes coming off when its skin is shed.

Furnishing: The floor should be covered with a



Top Tip...

"Leopard Geckos prefer a dry enclosure but require a humid area to shed their skin properly"

suitable substrate such as calci-sand or chipsi bark. Leopard geckos will require a humid nest box to sleep in during the day and climbing branches and rocks around the enclosure.

Cleaning: Remove all uneaten food and droppings daily. Water and food bowls should be cleaned daily. Vivariums should be completely cleaned out and disinfected with a reptile safe disinfectant every 4-6 weeks.

Health

It is important that your leopard gecko is kept in good health. Any change in behaviour or condition needs to be looked at and veterinary treatment may be required. A healthy leopard gecko will have bright eyes, good skin condition, walks normally and feeding and drinking regularly.

Below is a table to show some common health problems which can affect leopard geckos.

Health Issue	Symptoms and Causes	Suggested Action
Diarrhoea	Loose stools caused by bad diet, stress, unclean housing or other illness.	Consult with an exotic animal veterinarian to determine cause and treatment
Mouth Rot	Cheesy deposits appear within the mouth.	Consult with an exotic animal veterinarian for antibiotic treatment.
Respiratory Problems	Fluid or mucus appearing from the nose.	Contact an exotic animal veterinarian for antibiotic treatment.
Bone Disorders	Twisted, swollen or paralysed hind limbs or short, undershot jawbone.	Lack of calcium and UV lighting. Can be reversed if caught early.

Some reptiles are able to carry a form of salmonella. Salmonella is most usually contracted by ingestion. Good hygiene and washing hands after handling or cleaning your leopard gecko should be sufficient to prevent any risk of infection.

Leopard Gecko Checklist...

It is important that you have everything that your leopard gecko will need to make sure that they stay happy and healthy. These items are listed below:

- ✓ Appropriately sized vivarium
- ✓ A selection of live food
- ✓ Water bowl
- ✓ Branches and climbing rocks
- ✓ Hide boxes
- ✓ Suitable substrate
- ✓ Suitable lighting
- ✓ Heat mat
- ✓ Thermostat
- ✓ Calcium Supplement (Nutrabal)
- ✓ Reptile moss or vermiculite
- ✓ Vivarium Lock

The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please ask a member of staff or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.