

Leopard Gecko Care Sheet

Leopard geckos are one of the most common pet lizards. This is because of how easy they are to take care of. For this reason, I would recommend this species to anyone that is wanting to get their first lizard. However, like any reptile they do require special care.

Origins

Leopard geckos are naturally found in countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. They are a desert species of lizard. You will find them in and around small caves and holes where the soil is more humid. They will naturally look for humidity because they require humidity to ensure they shed their skin properly.

Temperatures and housing

Like all reptiles Leopard geckos are cold blooded. This means that they require a hot end of their enclosure and a cool end of their enclosure. This can be achieved by using a ceramic heat lamp on one end of the that is on a dimmer thermostat. This works by a digital thermometer reading the temperature of the tank at the hot end and when it reaches the desired temperature the thermostat will lower the amount of power going to the heater. This will decrease the temperature that the heater is emitting and will do so until the tank cools by about 2'c it will then increase the power and keep the temperature at a steady level. The hot end of the tank should be about 32'c or 90'F and the cool end should be 22'c or 80'F.

For the tank size you want to get a 3 foot by 2foot vivarium and because they are ground dwellers, they don't need lots of height however it can be good for them to have height because they do like

to climb low gradient slopes that can be achieved by piling up substrate or by using sheets or cork bark.

Substrates

The subject of substrates when it comes to leopard geckos is often considered a controversial one. This is because of impaction. This is when your gecko ingests some of there substrate that is non-digestible this is things like sand and fine gravel. This will then result in your gecko not being able to eat, which will then result in death if not seen by a vet.

Good substrates include:

Reptile carpet

Artificial grass

Paper towels

Newspaper

Dry Eco earth

Dry bark

Diet

Leopard geckos are Insectivores tis means they only eat insects. A leopard gecko should be offered a varied diet consisting of Mealworms/ Morio worms, locusts, crickets and calci worms.

You can also feed your gecko the occasional unhealthy insect such as wax worms,

Gut loading your feeder insects

Gut loading is a common practise amongst the reptile keeping community. It basically means that you feed up your insects before you feed them to your animal. There are many ways in which you can do this. You can buy a leopard gecko live food booster powder that you can feed to the insects before you give them to your Lizard or you can use reptile jelly pots that you can buy from most pet shops or you could feed them pieces of fruit and veg.

Cleaning the enclosure

You should spot clean the enclosure every day and remove any poo/soiled bits. Once a month you should completely change the substrate this involves removing the old substrate and cleaning the enclosure with a reptile safe disinfectant. You should then replace the substrate.

Water

You should provide your gecko with a shallow water bowl filled with fresh water daily and you should mist the enclosure once a day using either a hand spray bottle or a pump spray bottle as this is the main way they take on water.

Handling

Leopard geckos don't enjoy being handled but they can be trained to tolerate it very well if you buy a gecko that hasn't been handled much you will have to spend some time getting them used to you the best way to do this is to gently pick the lizard up and place it on your hand and allow it to walk up your arms. It is best to do this over a soft surface in case it falls. Over time the gecko will be calmer around you and will just stay till on you rather than run around.

Written by Jack Lander