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# LEOPARD GECKOS & AFRICAN FAT-TAILS GECKOS

## SPECIES NAMES

Leopard geckos (*Eublepharis macularius*), African fat-tailed geckos (*Hemitheconyx caudicinctus*). Both are members of the Eublepharidae family, which includes all species of geckos with moveable eyelids.

## CAGING/HOUSING

For a single gecko, a 10-gallon glass aquarium with a securely fastened wire mesh top is appropriate. For two or more geckos a 20-gallon or larger aquarium is necessary. For substrate use paper towels, newspaper, or artificial turf, washed orchard bark, or aquarium gravel. The use of sand or calcium-fortified sand (such as ReptiSand™ or Calci-Sand™) is not recommended for geckos less than 6 inches in length, due to the risk of ingestion and subsequent impaction in the gastrointestinal tract. A hide-box, or shelter, should be provided to allow the gecko a quiet retreat.

## LIGHTING/HEATING

In order to properly thermo-regulate, leopard geckos need a temperature gradient that allows them to move from a cooler end of the tank to a warmer end. This temperature gradient should range between 70°F at the cool end at 85°F at the high end. African fat-tailed geckos require slightly higher temperatures ranging from between 80°F and 92°F. Since these geckos are nocturnal, UV lighting is not necessary.

## HUMIDITY

A moderate level of humidity is required for these geckos, which can be provided by misting and providing a large water bowl for the animal to soak in. Low humidity levels can lead to problems with shedding.

## FEEDING

Food items, as a general rule, should be no longer than the length, and less than half the width of the geckos head. These geckos are primarily insectivorous. Food items should include a mixture of crickets, mealworms, waxworms, and other insects. Adult leopard geckos may also be fed the occasional pinkie mouse and superworms. Adult African fat-tailed geckos should be fed a pinkie mouse at least once every 2 weeks. Water should be offered at all times in a shallow dish and changed at least two to three times a week.

## VITAMINS/SUPPLEMENTS

Calcium supplementation is important in leopard geckos. A calcium supplement such as ReptoCal™ can be dusted directly onto insects or offered directly in a jar lid or other container. Immature leopard geckos can be given calcium supplements at every feeding, for adult geckos once or twice a week is usually sufficient. A multivitamin supplement such as Nekton-Rep™ or Reptivite™ should also be dusted on the insects once weekly. Insects may also be gut-loaded (made more nutritious) by feeding them a high quality cricket feed with vitamin supplements.

## REFERENCE

de Vosjoli P Klingenberg R Tremper R Viets B. The Leopard Gecko Manual. Irvine CA: Bowtie Press, 2004. [www.avsbooks.com](http://www.avsbooks.com)