



## Leopard & Fat Tail Gecko Care Sheet

These gecko's are considered one of the best beginner reptiles! They are really clean, low maintenance, hardy, don't take up very much space, cost of care is inexpensive and easily handled. Having a crepuscular day/night cycle they don't need to eat very much and have evolved very special attributes to conserve energy and don't need to leave their den often. They have the ability to drop their tail if they feel threatened, but can regrow a new tail if that occurs. Just be sure to handle with care and move slowly when interacting with them.

- **Adult Size:** Between 6" to 9"
- **Life Expectancy:** 18-20 years.
- **Tank Size:** Ideally a 24" x 18" footprint is best for a single gecko. There needs to be enough space to provide a warm and cool side so they can thermoregulate properly. They are not very good climbers so 18" high is the tallest enclosure recommended.
- **Lighting:** These guys spend most of their time sleeping, but do require around 10-12 hours of daytime. These gecko's do not require UV lighting but they will benefit from it. UV-A will stimulate appetite, activity, and seasonal cycles. UV-B enables the gecko to synthesize Calcium and vitamin D3. They do have pretty sensitive skin and can experience sunburn if the light is too powerful, please discuss your enclosure size and age of gecko with us so we can make recommendations of specific options.
- **Temperature/Humidity:** During the day Leopard & Fat tail geckos should have a temperature gradient between 70°F on the cool side and up to 90°F maximum on the warm side, target is 85°F. Depending on your average room temperature you can heat either using a heat mat that sticks to the outside underneath the tank plugged into a thermostat to control the temp it warms to or an overhead heat source either suspended from the lamp arm bracket so you can raise or lower the fixture to reach your target temp or resting right on the screen lid. This type of gecko does like it humid, so we recommend using a humid hide. This is a décor piece that has a top and bottom with a small opening for the animal to get in and out but retains humidity well. Inside the humid hide put some finely ground coco-fibre that is moistened with water, then place the humid hide on the warm side of the enclosure. Offering a humid hide is essential to ensure proper shedding.
- **Basic enclosure setup:** Start by setting up the enclosure with some reptile specific bark chips for substrate approximately 1-2" thick. On the cool side of the enclosure a small shallow water dish should be provided and a hide of some sort that the gecko can

sleep in mostly hidden. On the warm side of the enclosure you will need to put the humid hide. If you want to add more décor/foliage you can but don't have things the gecko can climb any higher than around 12" as they could potentially fall and hurt themselves. You will also need a thermometer that can be moved to measure the temperature gradient or have multiple.

- **Feeding:** It is recommended to feed your gecko in a feeding bin. Depending on the age of your gecko you will want to offer food daily, every second day, or twice a week. Crickets are the best food to offer as they will give the most mental and physical stimulation in the hunting process and also are the most nutritious as long as they are fed a good diet before being offered as food. Feed as many as the gecko will eat in about 15-20 minutes, you will see the gecko loose interest after it is full, then it can go back into its regular enclosure and the crickets go back into their container. You can offer worms to give some variety for the gecko, such as wax, butter, meal, king, silk and horn worms. These should also be offered in the feeding bin. If there are live feeders left to run loose in the gecko enclosure there is a chance that they will be cannibalistic towards the gecko and cause serious injury or even death, the gecko may also accidentally ingest substrate trying to catch them, and you don't know if the gecko is actually eating all the insects offered. It is also recommended to offer a vitamin powder on the crickets to ensure the gecko is getting all the vitamins and minerals they need. Leopard and Fat-Tail geckos will shed their skin regularly and they will actually eat it. If the gecko has just gone through a shed cycle it may not want any live feeders because they will have just filled up on their shed. The quantity of food consumed will also fluctuate depending on the time of year, they will naturally go through a breeding cycle where they will slow down or completely stop eating for a couple of weeks up to a couple of months. Their big fat tails are fat stores, they use these fat stores in their tail during these times to sustain themselves. It is normal for them to loose some weight in their tails during this time as long as they maintain a healthy body weight there is no cause for concern.
- **Water:** We use reverse osmosis water for all our reptiles here at Oasis. This is filtered water that doesn't have to be dechlorinated and also doesn't leave mineral deposits on the side of the dish as it evaporates. We also sell this water by the gallon, just bring a container for us to fill for you. If you want to use tapwater is recommended to use a reptile water conditioner to remove the chloring and chloramine.
- **Maintenance:** When your gecko is in its feeding bin, scoop out any poops you see in the enclosure, check to see if the water dish needs to be cleaned, and check to see if the humid hide needs to be re-hydrated. Replace the substrate (bark chips) and coco-fiber in humid hide once a year.