

African Fat-Tailed Gecko (*Hemitheconyx caudicinctus*)

— Complete Care Guide

Species Overview

- **Scientific Name:** *Hemitheconyx caudicinctus*
 - **Common Name:** African Fat-Tailed Gecko
 - **Origin:** West Africa (Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria)
 - **Habitat:** Humid savannas, scrublands, and forest edges
 - **Lifespan:** 10–20 years (with proper care)
 - **Adult Size:** 7–9 inches
 - **Temperament:** Docile, slow-moving, beginner-friendly
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Enclosure Setup

Tank Size

- **Minimum:** 20-gallon long (single adult)
- **Ideal:** 30–40 gallon for extra enrichment

Temperature Gradient

- **Warm side:** 88–92°F (belly heat preferred)
- **Cool side:** 75–80°F
- **Night:** Can drop to ~70°F

 Use an under-tank heater with a thermostat.

Humidity

- **Ambient:** 50–70%
- **Humid hide:** 70–90% (critical for shedding)

Substrate Options

- **Safe:**
 - Paper towels (easy cleaning)
 - Reptile soil mix (bioactive setups)
 - Coconut fiber

- Avoid:
 - Loose sand (impaction risk)



Decor & Hides

- Minimum **3 hides**:
 - Warm hide
 - Cool hide
 - Humid hide (moss inside)
 - Add cork bark, branches, and leaf litter for enrichment
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Lighting & UVB

- Not strictly required, but **low-level UVB (5.0)** is beneficial
 - Provide a **12-hour day/night cycle**
 - Avoid overly bright lighting (they are nocturnal)
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Diet & Feeding



Staple Feeders

- Crickets
- Dubia roaches
- Mealworms (in moderation)
- Occasional waxworms (treat only)



Feeding Schedule

- **Juveniles:** Daily
- **Adults:** 2–3 times per week



Supplements

- Calcium with D3: 2–3x per week
- Multivitamin: 1x per week



Always gut-load insects before feeding.

Water

- Provide a **shallow water dish at all times**
 - Light misting helps maintain humidity
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Handling & Behavior

- Generally calm and easy to handle
 - Move slowly—avoid sudden grabs
 - Rarely bite, but may drop tail if stressed
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Cleaning & Maintenance

- Spot clean daily
 - Deep clean monthly (non-bioactive setups)
 - Replace substrate regularly if not bioactive
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Shedding

- Occurs every few weeks
- Signs:
 - Dull coloration
 - Reduced appetite
- Ensure **humid hide is always available**

 Check toes and tail tip for stuck shed.

Common Health Issues

- **Impaction:** From loose substrate or large prey
 - **Metabolic Bone Disease (MBD):** From lack of calcium/UVB
 - **Dehydration:** Low humidity or no water
 - **Shedding issues:** Lack of humidity
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Breeding Basics (Optional)

- Males should be housed separately
 - Females lay 1–2 eggs per clutch
 - Incubation: ~85–90°F for ~50–70 days
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Fat-Tailed vs Leopard Gecko (Quick Note)

- More **humid environment** required
 - Slightly more shy than *Eublepharis macularius*
 - Similar care, but humidity is the key difference
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Quick Care Summary

-  20+ gallon tank
-  88–92°F warm side
-  50–70% humidity
-  Insect diet + supplements
-  3 hides (warm, cool, humid)