**Leopard Gecko – Care Sheet**

**Leopard Gecko:** Eublepharis macularius

Leopard geckos are a popular choice for reptile owners because they are friendly, active, and easier to take care of than some other reptiles. These little guys take well to human ownership and can provide endless entertainment. Utilizing the following advice will help you keep your leopard gecko happy and healthy.

**Basic Info**

Age: Average 8-10 years, but many have lived much longer

Size: 7-10 inches, depending on gender. Males are typically longer.

**Behavior**

One of the reasons why reptile owners love leopard geckos is because they are friendly and full of personality. Leopard geckos are able to vocalize (unlike most other reptiles) and have other idiosyncrasies, such as licking their eyes and “winking.” While nervous as hatchlings, geckos often become quite accustomed to being handled.

A defining characteristic of leopard geckos is their ability to detach their tail when they feel they are in extreme danger. While the tail will regenerate, it is a stressful event for any gecko to go through. If your pet will be around young children, it is important to provide proper supervision.

**Diet**

Leopard geckos rely mostly on a diet of insects. This includes crickets, roaches, flies, mealworms, phoenix worms, or others. A diet of about 3-4 insects daily or every other day, while making sure to dust the food with a calcium supplement with Vitamin D3 3-4 times per week is standard. Some owners also include a small bowl of calcium powder. It is also important to dust their food with a multivitamin supplement containing vitamin A once a week. Some good brands for this are Repashy Calcium Plus and ZooMed’s multivitamin. Also make sure your leopard gecko has plenty of fresh, clean water available at all times.

**Environment & Caging**

Leopard geckos do fine on their own, and for their housing you should provide at least a 20 gallon aquarium or cage. It is important that it:

* Contains a hide box, since they are nocturnal and will need a place to hide during the day.
* Contains a heat lamp or ceramic heat emitter that can keep one side of the cage between 85-90°F and the other between 78-80°F.
* Is kept at a proper humidity level to assist with shedding. The easiest way to do this is to keep a humid hide box by putting moist peat, sphagnum moss or damp paper towels inside. A food storage container with the lid on and a hole cut for a door works well for this; keeping it fully enclosed is important. You can also mist the tank as needed.
* Is lined on the bottom with newspaper, reptile carpet, paper towels, or some other non-particulate substrate.
* UV lighting may be helpful, but is not required for leopard geckos with a proper diet and supplementation. If you choose to add one, we recommend a low output bulb such as a ZooMed Reptisun 2.0 kept on for 4-6 hours per day.

**Veterinary Care & Preventive Care**

We recommend a physical examination every 6-12 months, where a vet can conduct a fecal examination and order blood work if necessary. Common problems we will look for include vitamin deficiency, parasites, eye problems, and trouble shedding.

To help with your leopard gecko’s shedding (adults can shed once a month), it is important to make sure they have daily soaks in warm water during this time, in addition to providing proper humidity. Without, your gecko may have a hard time shedding its skin, especially around the toes. This can lead to other health issues, so you may need to gently help remove any retained shed. Vitamin A supplementation is also important in preventing this problem.

Additionally, if your gecko drops its tail due to some sort of trauma, we recommend that you contact us so we can provide the proper advice on what to watch for as a new tail grows.