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GECKOS

Leopard gecko

Eublepharis macularius

A calm, ground-dwelling gecko from the dry rocky and grassy areas of southern Asia, with true eyelids, a thick tail full of fat reserves and the spotted pattern to which the species name *macularius* refers. It is one of the most commonly kept reptiles in the world and an obvious first choice, provided it gets heat from below and a dry enclosure.

Family: Eublepharidae Former name: *Cyrtodactylus macularius; Eublepharis fasciolatus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**17-25 cm** total length incl. tail
Weight	**45-80 g**
Lifespan	**15-20 years**
Active	**At dusk and at night**
Lifestyle	**Rock-dwelling and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Semi-desert and rocky terrain**
Difficulty	**Beginner**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**90 × 45 × 45 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**22-30 °C**
Basking spot	**32-35 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-22 °C**
Humidity	**30-40%**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**10-18 months**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Clutches per year	**6-10**
Incubation	**35-89 days** at 26-32 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Not listed**
EU annex	**Not listed**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

An adult needs an enclosure of at least 90 × 45 × 45 cm (length × width × height), and bigger is always an advantage. *Eublepharis macularius* lives on the ground, so floor area matters far more than height.

TEMPERATURE

Eublepharis macularius needs a temperature gradient, so that it can choose for itself. The basking spot under the heat source should be 32-35 °C measured on the surface, and the air at the warm end 28-30 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

The humidity should be low, around 30-40 %. The enclosure should not be misted daily, because constant moisture causes skin problems, fungus and respiratory infections.

LIGHTING AND UVB

Eublepharis macularius is active at dusk and at night and for many years was kept without UVB. Today, however, a weak UVB light is recommended, because it gives safer calcium metabolism and a more natural daily rhythm.

FEEDING

Eublepharis macularius lives entirely on live insects and other small animals. Good staples are crickets, dubia roaches, mealworms and silkworms.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Eublepharis macularius is calm and curious and can become very tame if handled gently. Lift it from the side with your hand under the body, never by the tail.

NATIVE RANGE

Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Nepal.