herpy

LACERTIDS

Gold Tegu

Tupinambis teguixin

Tupinambis teguixin is a large, powerful, diurnal tegu from the Amazon and the Guiana Shield, black with golden to yellowish bands. It reaches 60-120 cm, eats mostly animal food and is often defensive and hard to tame. It needs a very large, warm and humid enclosure, UVB and an experienced keeper who can handle a strong animal for 10-15 years.

Family: Teiidae Former name: *Tupinambis nigropunctatus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**60-120 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**10-15 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial and burrowing**
Habitat	**Savanna, rainforest and wetland**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**180 × 90 × 90 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-35 °C**
Basking spot	**40-55 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-24 °C**
Humidity	**70-85%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects, fruit, vertebrates and worms/snails**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**4-32 eggs**
Incubation	**150-180 days** at 28-32 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Little is known about the husbandry of *Tupinambis teguixin* in the narrow sense, and captive breeding is rare.
TEMPERATURE	The basking spot should have a surface temperature of 40-55 °C, measured with an infrared thermometer. The warm end of the enclosure is 32-35 °C and the cool end 24-29 °C.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity should be 70-85 %. That is higher than for most lizards and corresponds to a tropical forest. Keep the substrate moist but not wet, mist once or twice a day, or use a fogger.
LIGHTING AND UVB	*Tupinambis teguixin* is diurnal and basks for several hours a day, so it needs strong light and UVB 12 hours a day. Tegus belong to Ferguson zone 3. Use a T5 HO tube of 10-12 % in a fixture with a reflector over the basking spot.
FEEDING	*Tupinambis teguixin* is omnivorous but lives mostly on animal food: about 90 % animal food and 10 % fruit and vegetables.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Tupinambis teguixin* is strong, fast and defensive. Wild-caught animals are stressed and hard to tame, and they bite, lash with the tail and scratch if they feel threatened. A bite from an adult tegu can cause deep wounds.
NATIVE RANGE	Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia.