herpy

GECKOS

Yucatan banded gecko

Coleonyx elegans

A slender, nocturnal ground gecko from the forests of southern Mexico, Guatemala and Belize, with black, angular bands on a beige background and movable eyelids. It is related to *Eublepharis macularius*, but smaller and slighter, feeds on small insects and likes it warm, with a humid hide.

Family: Eublepharidae Former name: *Coleonyx coleonyx; Gymnodactylus scapularis* Published 15 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**13-18 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**8-12 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Dry forest and rainforest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 45 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-28 °C**
Basking spot	**29-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-23 °C**
Humidity	**50-60%**
UVB	**Optional**
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly, in pairs or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**11-12 months**
Clutch size	**1-2 eggs**
Incubation	**40-60 days** at 26-29 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	An adult needs a terrarium of at least 60 × 45 × 30 cm (length × width × height), and bigger is better. Floor area matters far more than height, because the species lives on the ground.
TEMPERATURE	Keep 24-28 °C by day and 20-23 °C at night, with a warm area of 29-32 °C at one end, so the animal can choose for itself.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Keep the humidity at 50-60 % and instead create a humid microclimate in the hide and in part of the substrate.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is nocturnal and does not need any special lighting. Timer-controlled light for 10-12 hours or daylight from the room gives a fixed daily rhythm. It should be dark at night.
FEEDING	The gecko feeds on insects and other small invertebrates. Dubia roaches or crickets are suitable as a staple, and small mealworms, soldier fly larvae and wax moth larvae provide variety.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The gecko is shy and active at night. Wild-caught animals are often nervous and easily shed the tail, while captive-bred animals can get used to the keeper and in time tolerate gentle handling.
NATIVE RANGE	Mexico, Guatemala and Belize.

The full guide with map and updates: herpy.org/gekkoer/coleonyx-elegans