



COASTWAY EXOTIC PETS

Portslade Clinic
11-12 Carlton Terrace
Portslade
East Sussex BN41 1XF

Tel: 01273 426100
Web: coastwayvets.co.uk

Guy Liebenberg
MSc BVSc MRCVS

Kim Prescott
BVSc MRCVS

Rowena Killick
BVM&S MRCVS

REPTILE CARE SHEET Leopard Geckos

These care sheets have been prepared by the Coastway Veterinary Group. The information will be useful for all first time exotic pet owners and for experienced owners who have just bought a new species. Information on breeding is not covered.

Before you buy your pet

Looking after any pet is a serious responsibility, ensuring it is properly fed, exercised and housed is only the start. Exotic pets need extra care and so can be a demanding option for any owner. There are several points to consider before taking one on.

- Check which species you are buying and exactly what the requirements of that species are.
- Ensure that your reptile is a product of captive breeding in the UK and was NOT wild caught and imported (this is an illegal and immoral trade).
- Remember, most reptile species kept as pets in the UK are not adapted for life in this climate so you will need to provide an environment that mimics their natural habitat *as closely as possible*.
- The majority of health problems suffered by pet reptiles are a direct result of incorrect housing and/or feeding. Most pet reptiles do not live nearly as long as their wild counterparts because they are not being kept under the right conditions.
- Remember to check what size your reptile will be when it is **fully grown!**
- All reptiles have bacteria in their gut, which may include Salmonella. But the risk to human health is low if you practise good hygiene.
- Vivaria should be cleaned regularly with a suitable reptile-safe disinfectant

Caring for a LEOPARD GECKO (*Eublepharis macularius*)

1. Relatively easy to keep - make good first time pets if kept correctly.
2. Natural life span: 8-15years
3. Size when fully grown: 18-25cm
4. Can be kept in female pairs or in colonies of one male to several females. **DO NOT KEEP MALES TOGETHER.**
5. Housing:
 - Dark wooden vivarium with glass front and adequate ventilation.
 - 30" long x 18" deep x 18" high is big enough for up to 3-4 geckos.
 - Hatchlings should be kept in smaller container inside future vivarium.
6. UV Light Source:
 - 2.0% UVB lamp replaced every 6 months unless otherwise stated by manufacturer.
 - Should be on for 8-12 hours per day.



REPTILE CARE SHEET

Leopard Geckos *continued*

7. Heat Source:
Either reflector (spot) lights in green, red or blue, ceramic or tubular heaters or thermostatically controlled heat mats.
8. Wire Mesh Guards should be fitted over all heat sources used within the vivarium to prevent thermal burns.
9. Thermostat: essential to regulate internal temperature of vivarium.
10. Thermometers:
 - At least one at each end of the vivarium to give an accurate reading.
 - Maximum and minimum thermometer sets are useful as they give an idea of the temperature range in the part of the vivarium they are placed.
 - Never go by the temperature on the thermostat as this is often inaccurate.
11. Temperatures required:
 - Basking area (hot spot) required at one end of vivarium: 30-35 deg. C (86-96 deg. F)
 - Rest of vivarium: 26-28 deg. C (approx 79-83 deg. F)
 - Night time: hot spot should be off, temperatures in vivarium 20-25 deg. C (approx 68-78 deg. F)
12. Humidity should be 50-55% (can be measured with a hygrometer).
13. Substrate:
 - Dry, dust-free sand, 2-4 inches (5-10cm) deep
 - Calcium sand best as it can be eaten without causing harm.
14. Hides are essential and can be made from cork bark or rock caves, *located away from the hot spot.*
15. Water:
 - Small, shallow water dish.
 - Lightly spray rocks in evening for lapping.
16. Food:
 - Live black field crickets, brown crickets, locusts, mealworms, waxworms, earthworms, fruit flies.
 - Should be coated with a reptile multivitamin and mineral supplement (eg. Vetark Nutrobal) prior to each feed.
 - Feed approximately every other day.

If you need more detailed information, you can call our Portslade surgery on 01273 426100, or refer to a specialist book or website for more information. You may find the following resources useful.

- *Exotic Animal Welfare Trust (EAWT) (charity) www.eawt.org*
Tel: 01388 730500, Fax: 01388 730501
- *British Chelonia Group (charity) www.britishcheloniagroup.org.uk*
- *Tortoise Trust (charity) www.tortoisetrust.org*
- *The Care of Reptiles and Amphibians in Captivity by Chris Mattison, publ. Blandford.*

Coastway Veterinary Group acknowledge the help and advice of the Exotic Animal Service of the University of Edinburgh, Royal [Dick] School of Veterinary Studies, Easter Bush Veterinary Centre, Roslin, Midlothian, EH25 9RG, in the preparation of this care sheet