



Leopard Gecko

Eublepharis macularius



Cheese

I was born December 26th, 2010 and I came to the Racine Zoo on December 27th, 2012.

I am one of the many ambassador animals at the zoo, so you won't see me on exhibit anywhere. However, you may see me during educational programs or animal pop-ups around the zoo!

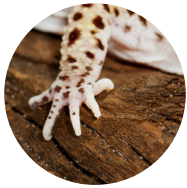
Crackers

I was born on May 9th, 2018 at the Como Zoo in Minnesota before coming to the Racine Zoo!

Like my neighbor Cheese, I am also an ambassador animal at the zoo, so I live behind the scenes, but you can frequently see me during educational programs or during animal pop-up!



LEOPARD GECKOS AT A GLANCE



- While other geckos use toe pads to climb vertical walls, they are not present in leopard geckos. Instead, their toes have **claws**.
- In the wild, leopard geckos eat scorpions, centipedes, spiders and beetles.
- At the zoo, our leopard geckos eat crickets and mealworms
- Unlike most geckos, leopard geckos do have **eyelids**. They can move them to blink and close their eyes.
- The leopard gecko's tail breaks off when grabbed by a predator or under stress. The twitching tail distracts the predator while the gecko escapes. The tail is segmented; if part of the tail is lost, it can regenerate, but may not look the same.

Male:

8 - 11 in

60 - 80 grams

Female:

7 - 8 in

50 - 70 grams



Avg. life expectancy in native habitats: up to 15 years

Avg. life expectancy in human care: up to 20 years

WHERE ARE NATIVE LEOPARD GECKO HABITATS LOCATED?



Leopard Geckos are native to the dry and semi desert areas of the Middle East and South Asia (including Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and northwest India). Unlike their other gecko counterparts, this species is terrestrial, or land-dwelling. They often live underneath rocks and within burrows.

Leopard Gecko Behaviors

SLEEPING

Leopard geckos are nocturnal lizards, meaning they are most active at night. Due to this, they spend most of the day sleeping under burrows.

My home has a variety of hides, rocks, and wood that I can sleep under to feel safe!



LICKING

Licking behavior helps leopard geckos smell and taste their environment. They use their tongues to explore!

Licking helps me get a better sense of my surroundings!



CLIMBING

Leopard geckos are known to be curious, and often use climbing to find safety or food. They have clawed-toes that help them grip onto rocks and branches.

I like when my keepers switch around my habitat, or give me new toys to climb and explore!



SHEDDING

Like all other reptiles, leopard geckos shed their skin to allow for the growth of new, healthy skin. Keepers provide a "humid hide" to help with the shedding process.

I will eat my shed skin to gain back any nutrients I lost during the shedding process!



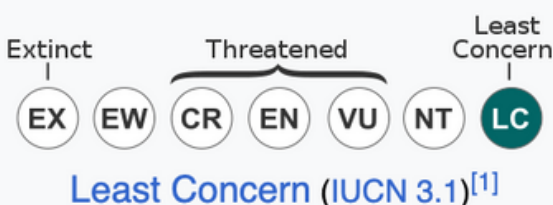
- Sex is dependent on temperature; while in the eggs, females form in cooler temperatures (80–84°F), while males form in warmer temperatures (88–90°F). Above 90°F produces "hot females;" more aggressive and infertile.
- Leopard geckos seem to communicate via chirps when alarmed or annoyed, and clicking when "conversing" among themselves.
- Slow tail shakes tell other geckos that they have been noticed; fast tail moves by a male mean he's noticed a female. The tail is said to shake when a gecko is hunting

Leopard Gecko Conservation

Leopard geckos are very popular in the pet trade and sometimes are unfortunately released to the wild in non-indigenous areas. These geckos are very effective in maintaining insect populations.

Leopard geckos are currently listed as **least concern**. There is concern with this species being wild-caught for the pet trade.

Conservation status



How can we help?

You can help keep wild geckos safe by purchasing your pets from reputable breeders, and doing lots of research before bringing home your new friend!

Other wild reptiles are greatly affected by pollution and habitat loss. Help out the reptile friends in your backyard by picking up litter and recycling!