

African Fat-Tailed Gecko

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The African Fat-Tailed Gecko is one of the best species of Gecko to keep. They are tamer, more docile, and more comfortable with being held and handled than most other tropical geckos. However, these pets are nocturnal, so they won't be too entertaining to watch during the day. Rather, during nighttime is when these captivating creatures are most active.

Species Profile: African Fat-Tailed Gecko

Scientific Name:	<i>Hemitheconyx caudicinctus</i>
Natural Environment:	West Africa (Nigeria to Senegal).
Average Size:	5"-8" long; Males tend to be slightly larger.
Average Life Span:	Approximately 15 years.
Appearance:	The Fat-Tailed Gecko is known for its velvety appearance. There are two pattern morphs, one with a white dorsal stripe running from the top of the head to the end of the tail, and one without. The most common color morph has alternating bands of chocolate brown and lighter brown on the entire body.
Habitat	
Size:	A 10 gallon or larger aquarium with a screen cover is appropriate. Be sure to allow room for food and water dishes and a hide box.
Lighting:	Provide at least 12 hours of incandescent light; the light also serves as a heat source.

Temperature:	Use a combination of incandescent lights and an under-cage heating pad to keep the temperature gradient of 75°-90°F at night and 85°-90°F during the day.
Humidity:	A mister is beneficial for providing necessary moisture and humidity, especially during shedding. Use moist peat moss or vermiculite in the hide box. A bowl of fresh water should always be available.
Housing:	This species does not climb, but hiding and burrowing sites are a must. This can be achieved by placing plants, vines, and hiding caves. Fat-Tailed Geckos can be kept in pairs, especially if you plan to breed. Never place two males in the same terrarium, they are extremely territorial. Do not use hot rocks.
Substrate:	A combination of newspaper, bark and moss.
Diet/Feeding:	Feed crickets coated with vitamin or mineral supplements. Calcium-fortified mealworms may be fed once a month. Egg-laying females and adults may receive an occasional pinkie mouse.
Behavior/Interaction:	Fat-Tailed Geckos are more mellow and docile than other geckos such as the Leopard Gecko. They tend to tolerate some handling, if done with care. Since these geckos are nocturnal, they are more active during night hours. In order to view them during their peak activity, use a red bulb in your terrarium.
Interesting Facts:	Fat-Tailed Geckos store their fat in their tails, making them proportionally larger than the rest of their bodies, hence their name. Care must be taken when handling the Fat-Tailed Gecko because the tail can easily break off. When it regrows, it is shorter and stumpy. They vocalize by clicking the tongue on the roof of the mouth.