



Husbandry Handbook

OCELOT GECKO

Paroedura pictus

A Big Headed Gecko

Full of personality and color, the ocelot gecko is a popular choice among beginners. This eye-catching species is also known as a Madagascar ground gecko, pictus gecko and panther gecko. Ocelot geckos naturally have a reddish brown, brown to cream base color and dark banding with a dorsal stripe. As a terrestrial species, their earth tones offer them the ability to camouflage. These geckos have a proportionally large head compared to its body, but they stay between 4 to 6 inches long as adults. Just like many other geckos, the ocelot gecko has a thick tail that is used to store fat during dry periods.

Habitat

Ocelot geckos are native to southern Madagascar where they can be found on the forest floor or scrubland. As a terrestrial (ground dwelling) species, the ocelot gecko spends most of its time on the ground level but will occasionally climb into low shrubs and vegetation. They are the most active at night since they are nocturnal. These geckos should be housed alone as they are territorial.

Housing

Housing for ocelot geckos should be sealed and escape proof. As hatchlings, these geckos can be housed in a Size 5 to 10 Zilla® Critter Cage or 12x12x15 Zilla® Front Opening Terrarium. Adults will require a Size 10 to 20 Long Zilla® Critter Cage or 18x18x20 Zilla® Front Opening Terrarium. Provide ocelot geckos with a substrate that holds humidity well such as the Zilla® Jungle Mix, Bark Blend or Coconut Husk Brick. Set up your enclosure with driftwood, rocks, logs and a Zilla® Rock Lair with moss. Use a small bowl or dish to provide fresh water two to three times weekly. Spot clean the enclosure for urates, feces, or uneaten food at least twice per week. Be sure to periodically replace the substrate, clean, and disinfect the enclosure and its furnishings at least every 2-3 months.

Temperature and Lighting

Ocelot geckos should be maintained at an ambient temperature between 70-75°F with a basking temperature on one side of the enclosure between 80-85°F. They do not require UVA/UVB lighting but providing it in moderate amounts can be beneficial to their immune system. Use the Small Zilla® Heat Mat and the Zilla® Dual Low Profile Fixture with a 25W Day Blue Zilla® Mini Halogen Bulb and Tropical Zilla® Mini Compact Fluorescent Bulb.

Feeding and Diet

In their natural habitat, ocelot geckos are primarily insectivorous. In captivity, they can be fed feeder insects such as crickets, roaches, mealworms, wax worms and superworms. Feeder insects should be given Zilla® Gut Load Cricket Drink. By feeding these products, you will increase the nutritional value of your feeders. These geckos also require additional calcium and Vitamin D3 supplementation 1 to 2 times weekly. Spray Zilla® Calcium Supplement on their food in order to prevent metabolic bone disease.

Handling

The ocelot gecko is a small and delicate species to handle. Allow them to walk from hand to hand. Do not grab your gecko by its tail. This may cause the tail to detach because you may be perceived as a predator.

Be sure to wash your hands after handling any animals.

