



# Western New York Herpetological Society

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**Common Name:** Tokay Gecko

**Latin name:** *Gekko gekko*

**Native to:** Northeastern India, Bangladesh, Burma, Thailand, Indochina, southern China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Sulu Archipelago and eastern Indoaustralasian archipelago. They have also been introduced into other areas including southern Florida.

**Size:** Adults average 10 to 14 inches in length. Hatchlings are usually four inches in length.

**Life span:** These geckos will live 7 to 10 years.

**General appearance:** This aggressive gecko has an attractive gray to blue body with orange to red spots and flecks. The whole body is covered with small angular scales with tubercular scales on the back of the gecko. The toes have large undivided adhesive pads which they can climb almost any surface. The male is distinguished from the female by an angular row of 10 to 24 pre-anal pores. Tokay geckos have voices that bark, grunt and trill.

## **Housing requirements:**

**Enclosure:** Tokay geckos can be kept singly in a 10 to 20-gallon aquarium. You can house them in groups, however it is inadvisable to keep males together as they will fight. You can keep up to six geckos in a 55-gallon aquarium. When possible choose high tanks over long tanks. Screened enclosures are not a good choice because of the geckos' delicate foot structure.

**Temperature:** Tokay geckos should be kept in a relative cage temperature of 85° to 90° F during the day with a 15° F drop during the night.

**Heat/Light:** A heat lamp may be used. As Tokay geckos are nocturnal, ultra-violet lighting is not necessary but can be used for aesthetic purposes and plant maintenance. Undertank heaters are rarely used by this gecko. A photoperiod of 10 hours light and 14 hours darkness is adequate.

**Substrate:** Potting soil and sand mixture, orchid bark, coconut fiber or fir bark can all be used as substrate.



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**Environment:** Tokay geckos are from the tropical rainforest, but they can be found at home within human habitations as well. Since they are a rainforest species a relative humidity should be around 70% to 90% and should not drop below 50%. The substrate listed above will help in keeping the humidity in the desired range. Strong plants such as croton and wax flower are recommended. The back wall of the terrarium can also be lined with bark. Split branches, cork tubes and grape wood branches can also be used.

**Diet:** Tokays are not squeamish and will eat a wide variety of insects. Crickets should be a staple and will be relished. Wax worms, wax moths, superworms, locusts and even pinky mice will be eaten. Food should be offered every other day. Dusting of insects with a multipurpose reptile vitamin/mineral powder should be done at least every third feeding.

**Maintenance:** Spot cleaning of the terrarium should be done as needed. A complete breakdown of the terrarium and replacement of the substrate should be done every three to four months. Humidity can be maintained by daily misting once in the morning and once in the evening. These geckos stress with handling and should be considered a “hands off” gecko. If captured they will bite strongly. As these bites can be quite painful, it is best to wear strong gloves when handling is necessary. As the vast majority of Tokay geckos are imported and very few are captive bred, wild caught animals may be loaded with parasites. It is recommended to have a veterinarian check for these parasites with a fecal flotation exam.

## **Other references or recommended reading:**

Keeping and Breeding Geckos by Hermann Seufer pp 99 – 108

Reptile Annual 1996 by Douglas Elleston pp 11 – 20

Gekko Volume One Issue Two pp 6 – 9

Reptile Hobbyist Volume One Number Six by Roy Hunzinker pp 22 – 27

Reptile Annual 2000 by Robert Baldwin pp 122 - 127