The Crested gecko guide

Morphs, Breeding, and Care.

By: Mystic Dragon Exotics

My name is Cheyenne from **Mystic Dragon Exotics** and i'm putting together this Crested Gecko Guide along with the help of some amazing friends and breeders. This guide will cover morph identification, proper breeding, and care. My main reason for putting this together is because I see so much misinformation out there on exotics. I want to help eliminate a lot of the wrong information out there. I hope everyone gives this guide a read, and please check out all of my friends who helped me put this together as the end!



Crested gecko morphs

In the world of reptiles and exotics, Morphs play a big part in the community. This section will go over main morphs and traits in crested geckos. Before Discussing morphs and traits, Some gecko anatomy needs to be looked at.

Dorsal- The Dorsal of the crested gecko is the flat strip that runs from the base of the neck to the base of the tail.

Crest- The crest of the geckos are the elongated spikes that come out the side of their head.

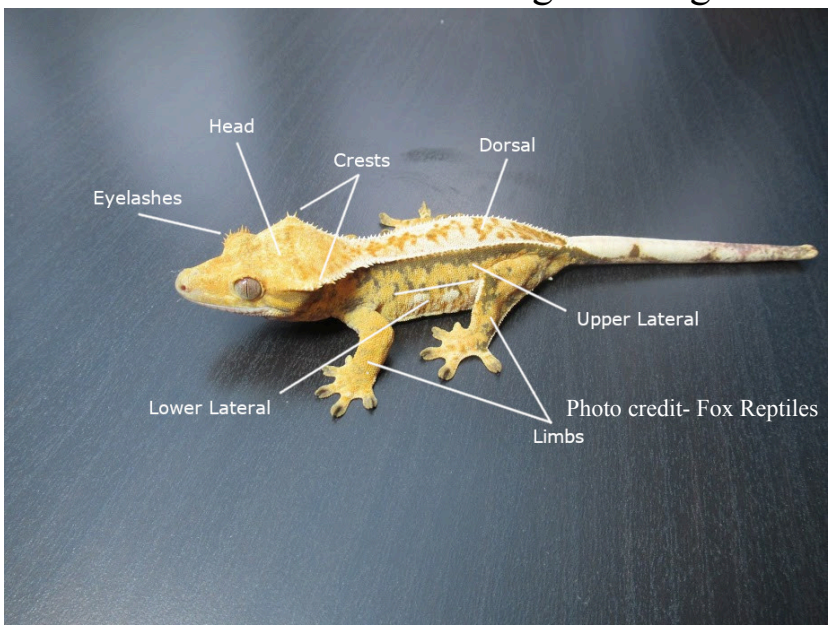
Head- This is the top of the head.

Eyelash- The elongated spikes that are above the eyes of the gecko.

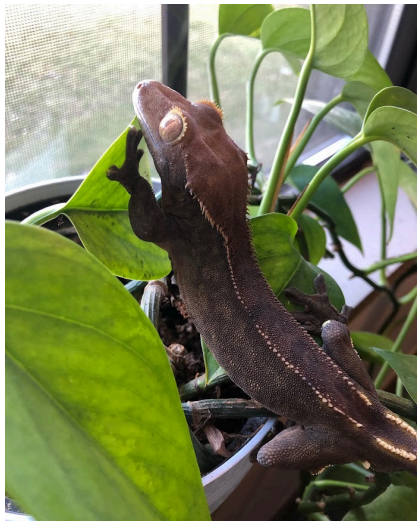
Upper lateral- The top half of the side of the gecko.

Lower lateral- The bottom half of the side of the gecko.

Limbs- This refers to the arms and legs of the gecko.



Patternless- Patternless is a gecko who is one solid color with faded markings or non at all. Patternless geckos can display some spotting as well. These are known as **patternless dalmatian** or just **dalmatian.** A patternless gecko who fires up a gray, tan or brown color are referred to as **buck skins.** Patternless crested geckos can come in any color and are usually described as patternless red, patternless yellow etc. The tail can be any color.



Patternless



Patternless dalmatian



Buckskin

Bi-color- A bi-color crested gecko is another variation of patternless. The difference is that they display 2 different colors. One color on the head and dorsal, and the other on the body and legs. The tail can be any color. The color that runs along the head to dorsal, has to be in the same color family as the base. So a red bi-colored crested gecko will have one shade of red running from the head to dorsal, and another shade of red on the body and legs.



Bi-Color



Tiger- A tiger crested gecko has a pattern that appears as vertical stripes, that are usually darker than the base color. In order to be a tiger the vertical lines have to extend from the dorsal to the belly as an unbroken line.

Bold Tiger Strip- A bold tiger strip is another variation of tigerstripe. The only difference is the thickness and boldness of striping.

Brindle- Brindle is like the tiger morph but the striping is more broken and only some will match up with the dorsal. Brindle markings can appear in vertical dots and dashes along the belly. The striping will be uneven or broken in pattern.



Tiger strip



Bold tiger strip



Brindle

Flame- Flame crested geckos display two distinct colors. They will have one base color running from their belly to legs, and a contrasting color (cream, white, yellow, or orange) running from their head to dorsal. They can have some pattern on their body but will have no pattern on their legs The big difference between a flame and bi-color is that the contrasting color will be quite different than the base color. When identifying flames, the base color will determine its name. Example, a crested gecko with a red base and yellow contrast will be named a red flame.



Flame



Harlequin- This morph is similar to the flame morph except, they have more patterning that can show up on their legs, head, and underside of their belly. They can have an abundance of patterning or only a little bit of patterning. They will display one base color with a contrasting color on the head, dorsum, legs, and sides of belly. Harlequins can come in about every color combination.



Harlequin



Extreme harlequin- This morph is able to express any of the color combinations of harlequin. The abundance of pattern is what separates this morph from standard harlequins. This morph will express an abundance of pattern all over their body including the upper lateral, neck, head, and Sometimes on the underside of their belly.



Extreme



Tri-color- The Tri-color morph, or also known as calico, displays three distinct colors. The base color can be any color and the three colors displayed will be evenly expressed along the laterals.



Tri-color



Lily white- The lily white morph is one of the most stunning morphs in crested geckos (in my opinion). There are a few different factors that have to be present in order for a crested gecko to be considered a lily white. Lily whites will have a high white or cream color that covers the majority of their body; However the base color can be any color depending on what you breed them with. One thing to look for in hatchlings to determine if they are lilies are their tails and scales. The

tails with babies will be completely white from the base to the tip of the tail.

Some pattern on the tail can be present on the underside of the tail but a true lily white will have no breakage in color topside view of the tail; However the lower end to tips of the tail can have a different shade or some stippling but it will not create a pattern. The next thing to look for are the scales on the gecko. Lilies will have slightly larger more raised scales that are on the flanks of the gecko. These scales can be in a row or just a few scales. The scales themselves will be a cream or white. The coloring on the flank will often times be much lighter than the dorsum. As the gecko ages the cream colors can spread upwards and cover more of the gecko.



Lily Whites



Anxthantic- This morph is a rare genetic mutation where they do not have the ability to produce yellow, and red pigments. This usually results in geckos who appears all black and some scattered white markings. As far as crested geckos go this morph is the only one that can be het axanthic; Het is when a recessive gene is carried by the offspring without it being visual.



c-Anxthantic

Newer Crested Gecko Morphs

There are a few new morphs that have been discovered in the past few years. These morphs are still being worked with and new information is always popping up on them. I will be updating this section as new proven info comes out. The new morphs are Cappuccino, Frappuccino, Pos Cappuccino and Super Cappuccino.

Cappuccino/ Pos Cappuccino- This morph was recently discovered in 2020. These geckos tend to have a darker color or brown color due to the extra melanin in their skin. They will also tend to fire down a nice grayish blue or gray color; This isn't always the case. Cappuccinos will often have the ends of their tails be darker in color or almost completely black. A lot of the Capps and Pos Capps have a v or y shape at the base of the tail usually in cream, white, or yellow. This isn't always the case but it's very common.

What is the difference of Pos Cappuccino and Cappuccino?- The big difference between these two is the fact that Pos Cappuccinos are crested geckos that could possibly be Cappuccino. The only way to prove if a Pos Capp is a Cappuccino is by breeding. If you put a Pos Capp with a proven, or Pos with Pos together and they produce a Super Capp, Then the parents are Proven Capps.

What is a Super Cappuccino?- A Super Capp is just that. It's the super form of Cappuccino. These supers tend to have much smaller nostrils, They are melanistic and will have black eyes when they are first born. Their skin looks translucent.

What are Frappuccinos?- Frapps are the pairing of a proven Cappuccino and lily white. Pos Frapps are when you breed a Pos Capp to a lily white.







Capps Proven through Breeding





Pos Capps That Haven’t been proven through Breeding

Crested Gecko Traits

Traits are not the same thing as morphs. Traits are different patterns, colors, or a lack of both, that are passed onto the offspring despite the morph. A good example is the port hole trait or dalmatian trait.

Dalmatian Trait- This trait is spotting that shows up on a crested gecko. Most of the time the spots are black but can also be red or olive in color. There are different kinds of dalmatian spotting like super dal, Ink spot, oil spot, cluster spot and red spot.

Dalmatian- A dalmatian crested gecko is simply a crested gecko with spotting throughout their body.

Super Dal- A super dal has significantly more spotting than normal dalmatians all over their body.

Ink spot- This trait is also known as blotch or ink splotch. This trait shows very large spotting on the crested gecko. The spots will often be misshapen or resemble an ink stain.

Oil spot- This type of spotting is light in color or looks faded. They are often grayish or a green hue.

Cluster spot- This trait refers to cluster spotting. This is when the spotting is in close grouping with one another.

Red Spot- This type of spotting is just that, red spots. They can also show up along with black spots. If there is more black spots than red

spots they are considered a dalmatian with red spotting. If there are more red spots than black spots they are considered red spotted dalmatian.



Dalmatian



Super Dal



Ink/oil



Red Spot

Pinstripe trait- The pinstripe trait displays elongated scales that run from the base of the neck all the way to the base of the tail. These scales are usually highlighted with a white or cream color. There are different types of pin stripes that include: Pin-dash, Partial pinstripe, Full pinstripe, Reverse pinstripe, Quad stripe and Phantom pin stripe

Pin-Dashed- This trait is unlikely to have elongated scales across the dorsum however these scales are highlighted with white or cream and appear as dashes along the back of the gecko.

Partial Pinstripe- This trait displays elongated pin scales that are highlighted in cream or white. What makes it a partial instead of full is the fact that there will be a break in the pin stripping on either side. Even if it's one pin that isn't highlighted, it will be labeled as partial.

Full Pinstripe- This trait displays elongated scales that are highlighted in cream or white that form an unbroken line on either side of the dorsum. It has to cover all the way from the back of the neck to the base of the tail.

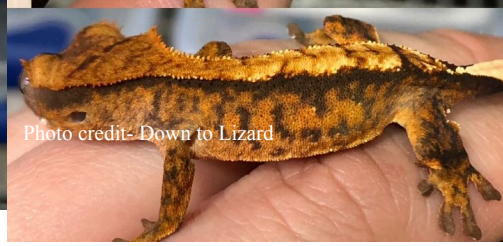
Reverse Pinstripe- This trait displays a dark line running alongside the elongated dorsum scales, on the outer most edge of the dorsal stripe. This is typically seen on lighter morph geckos than dark.

Quad pinstripe- This trait displays the normal pin striping along the dorsal but they will also display 2 more stripes along the sides of the gecko.











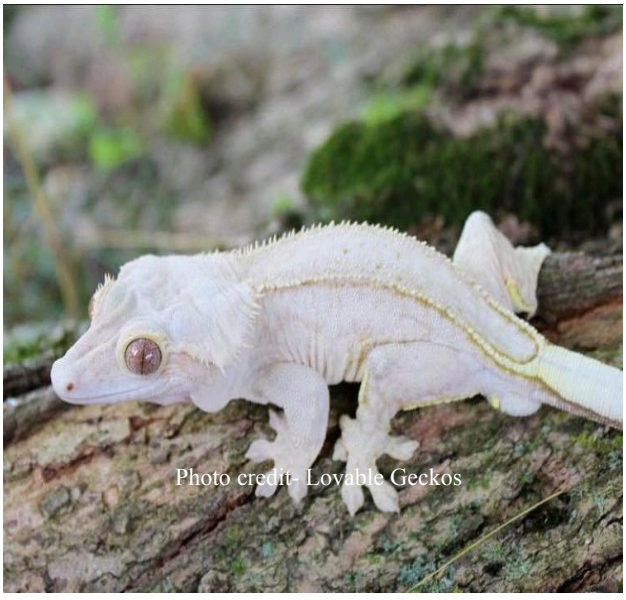


Phantom pin stripe- With this trait there are 3 classifications of phantom pinstripe. I'm going to separate them into sub categories of A, B, and C. All three are just Phantom pinstripes but can have different looks.

Phantom (A)- This gecko displays elongated scales that are highlighted in white or cream. What differentiates this gecko trait from a normal pin strip is the dorsal strip. A standard pin strip usually displays a contrasting color from the base color on the dorsal; Much like a Flame. The difference here is that the dorsal color is the same color as the base.

Phantom (B)- This Gecko, who is is typically patternless, displays elongated pin scales along the dorsal stripe that are not highlighted in white or cream. These elongated scales form an easy recognizable stripe, and the stripe is the same color as the base color.

Phantom (C)- This gecko displays elongated pin stripes that are darker than that of the base color of the gecko.







(A) (B) (C)

White wall- This trait is just a white wall that is along the lower lateral of the gecko. It has to be unbroken to be considered a white wall. It can show up in almost every morph.



Other Traits Crested Geckos Can Have

The fringe and kneecap- The fringe is the white, cream, or yellow outline of the hind legs of a crested gecko. The knee cap is the same thing, but it outlines the knees of the geckos.

Blushing- This trait is a distinct red or orange hue that appears underneath their head and on their throat.

Crowned crest- The crowned crested gecko is where the crest sticks out of the side of their head more than a normal crest. Sometimes it can be so big that it flops down over the side of their head.

Furry crest- This trait is confused with the pinstripe trait but the main difference is that the spikes will go down the dorsal but it doesn't do so in a straight line. They are spread apart and disorganized

White spot/ Snowflake- This trait is usually seen with high cream or high white crested geckos. This trait is displayed by white spots along the limbs or laterals of the gecko.

Bald crest- Just as the name suggests this trait is when the gecko has little to no crest at all.

Drippy- This trait is seen in high cream or white crested geckos. This trait gives the look that the dorsal is dripping over the side of the crested gecko. It can also drip up from the side patterns.

Porthole- This trait is a line of white spots on the side of the gecko. It gets its name from resembling the portholes of a ship.






Snow flake trait
Picture credit- Down to Lizard


Drippy Trait
Photo credit- Elemental Exotics


Fringe/ Knee cap trait
AA530.1
Photo credit- Sublime Reptiles

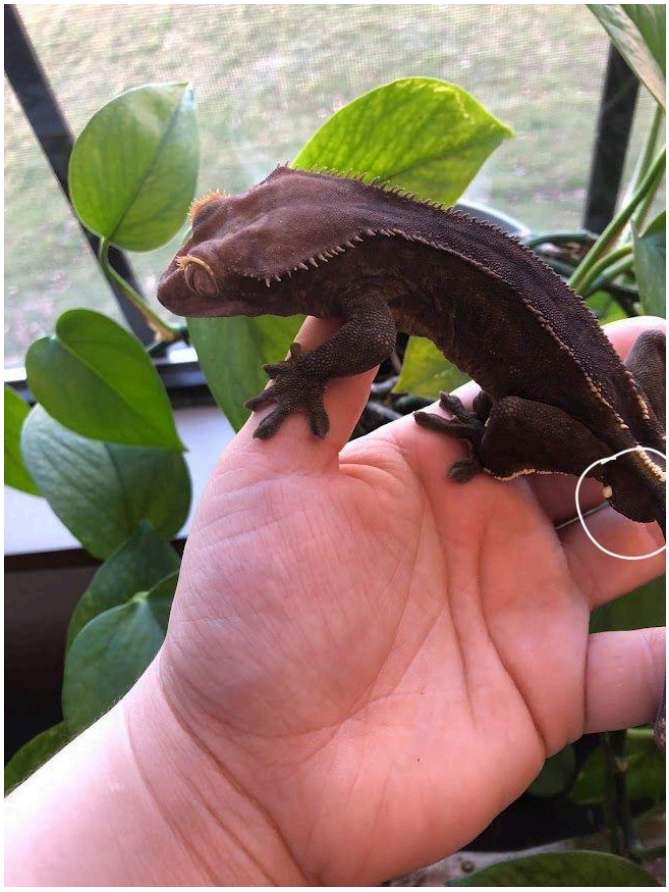

Furry crest trait
Photo credit- Madish Geckos


Porthole trait
Photo credit- Lovable geckos

Crested Gecko Breeding

This section is going to discuss how to properly breed crested geckos; Along with how to incubate the eggs, introduce crested geckos, and hatchling care.

How to tell an adult female from male- When looking at adult crested geckos, it's pretty easy to tell the male from female. The males will have whats called a Hemipenal bulge right under their vent. The females will be flat under their vents.



Male



Female

Pairing crested geckos- When you decide you want to breed crested geckos you will need to consider who to pair. I will always suggest ensuring the health of both male and female geckos before pairing. You want to make sure that neither have parasites, or other health issues that could spread to the rest of your breeders or offspring. When you get a new male or female you want to quarantine, for about a month, to ensure the new addition does not have any parasites or other issues. You also need to ensure that each gecko is the proper weight and age before pairing; Especially for females.

Why is weight important- Proper weight when breeding will limit the amount of issues you could potentially run into when breeding younger smaller crested geckos. You want your ideal breeder females to weigh around 40g-45g and be about 2 years old. The males need to be around the same weight as the females when you decide to pair them. If you breed when they aren't the proper weight or age, you risk your females becoming egg bound, prolapse's, and even death. Males can end up with prolapses as well if breed to early.

Why do they need to be around the same weight?- Having both your male and female weigh around the same will help prevent bullying or injuries when breeding. When males try to breed with females, biting and pursuing is involved. If the male is bigger than the female, he could end up hurting her without meaning to. If the female is bigger than the male, the same concerns can happen. If injuries do occur when paring, Separate them immediately and treat the wounds with antibiotics until healed. When they have healed, you can try to reintroduce them again.

Before pairing- One last thing you should ensure before pairing your crested geckos, are their calcium sacs. This is important for your female breeders. You want to insure that your female breeders calcium sacs are full and healthy before breeding. This is important for egg development. If they don't have enough calcium, the female is more prone to become egg bound or the eggs won't develop right.

How do I check their calcium sacs?- It's pretty easy to check their calcium sacs. Their calcium sacs are located in the back of their throat. In order to check if these sacs are full, get your gecko to open their mouths. The best way to do this is to gently, but firmly, hold your gecko and rub the sides of their mouth until they open up. Then look in the back of the throat for two bright white sacs. If they are nice, white, and full looking, they are good on calcium. If they are looking a bit small and not as full, you can supplement some calcium without D3 in their next feeding to give them a little extra.



Full calcium sacs



Could use some more calcium

Introducing crested geckos- Now that your breeders are healthy and ready to breed you have to introduce them. The most common method is to introduce the male crested gecko into the females enclosure. This will

result in the least amount of stress on your female geckos. Monitor your geckos while they are paired together; As long as there aren't any injuries on either party they can stay together for the duration of 1-2 weeks. After this time you can return the male gecko back to his enclosure.

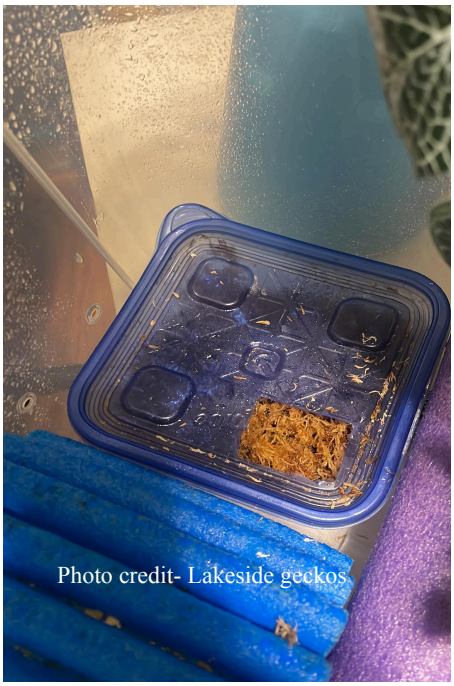
Another way you can introduce them is by creating a neutral space using a tub or empty cage. You can introduce them in this neutral space and monitor your geckos. This can also help ensure a visual lock. You want to return the geckos back into their enclosures. Do not keep them in these empty spaces.



The importance of egg laying boxes- When you decide to pair your geckos together you want to have an egg laying box ready for your female geckos. You typically always want to have one since females can lay unfertilized eggs without a male. Having an egg laying box that has

coco fiber with moss in it will help your gecko lay their eggs there instead of a random place in the enclosure. This will also help them stay moist just in case you don't notice they have laid their eggs right away.

Making an egg laying box- making one of these boxes is pretty simple. You can use a tupperware container that's at least bigger than your gecko and fill it with coco fiber and moss. You can choose to put a lid on top or leave it open. If you do put a lid on it make sure there is a 2 inch opening for your females to get in and out. Make sure that their egg laying box stays humid and moist for your geckos.


Photo credit- Lakeside geckos



How long does it take for females to lay their eggs?- When it comes to females becoming gravid, it usually takes about 30-45 days from a successful lock with the male for the female crested geckos to lay their eggs.

How can I tell if my female is gravid?- Females will display a few different behaviors when they are gravid. They will stay in one spot,

usually in the warmer part of the enclosure, They will eat more than usual for nutrients, and they will start to gain weight rapidly.

How can I tell when the female will lay eggs?- A few days before females lay their eggs, They will start to dig in multiple different spots for the perfect spot to lay their eggs. This process can take 1-5 days of them digging every night before they are satisfied with a spot and lay.

What to do with the eggs?- When your female has successfully laid their eggs, hopefully in the egg laying box, you want to inspect the eggs for color and look. Healthy fertile looking crested gecko eggs will be solid, and bright white in color. It can be hard to tell if an egg is infertile right out the gate. If the egg is infertile it will start to brown, mold/ get fuzzy or dent in a couple of weeks. You should incubate all eggs, even if they don't look fertile because each egg can be different depending on how the egg develops.

Fertile eggs and candling- These eggs will usually look white and solid in color. You can also tell if an egg is fertile by candling the egg. This is when you take a bright light source and place it under the egg in a dim room. If you see a red ring that encircles ⅓-¼ of the top of the egg it is fertile. Even if you don't see this initially, wait a few weeks and try again. Sometimes it takes time for this ring to develop.

Infertile eggs- these eggs will look solid and white in the beginning but after a few weeks it will start to brown, mold, or dent, this could be a sign that the egg wasn't fertile to begin with. These eggs will also look completely yellow when candling.

Dented eggs- dents in the eggs don't always mean that they are going bad. They can also mean that the egg is drying out either because the female laid outside of the nesting box or the nesting box wasn't moist enough. This egg is lacking moisture and is drying out. You can try to save this egg by placing it in a humid incubator box or by placing a damp paper towel over it.

Bumpy eggs- This isn't always a bad sign this just means that the eggs poorly calcified. This egg is still viable the only issue you may run into is the hatchling may have a hard time pipping the egg because its tough and leathery due to poor calcification.

Incubating eggs- Now that you know what to look for during the incubation process, let's talk about how to make your own incubator.

Making and incubator- Crested gecko eggs are pretty easy to incubate since you don't need an incubator. One of the most popular box's used for incubation are the sectioned tool/ bead boxes you can find in hardware or the craft section. These are very popular due to you being able to section off the box how you want and that they are secure and keep moisture in. You can also use deli cups or even small tupperware containers. Once you get your container you will need your hatch medium to keep the humidity and moisture up in your incubation container.







Hatch medium- There are multiple different forms of hatch mediums you can use for your crested gecko eggs. Some of these include: Pangea hatch medium, Perlite, or super hatch. Either of these options work great for crested gecko eggs. When you use these moist mediums you want to ensure that the humidity is in the high 80% for these guys. You want to ensure that you don't make the hatch medium to wet or it could cause molding and other issues for the egg.





Hatch Mediums

Incubation temperature- For crested geckos you don't need a high incubation temp to hatch these eggs; But depending on what temp you incubate them at can determine how long it takes for them to hatch. You can incubate the eggs 65-78 degrees F. The lower end of that spectrum can take the eggs up to 130 days to hatch. The higher end can take as little as 65days. Each egg will be different depending on the egg itself and incubation fluctuations. You want to try and keep the eggs at a

steady temp, whichever you choose, and avoid major temp spikes or drops.

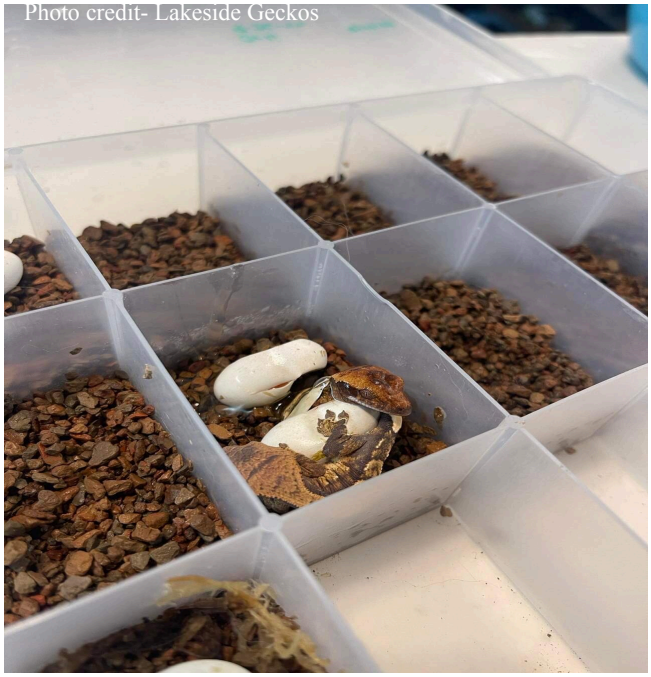
You want your incubators to be secure and sealed. If your container is completely sealed then you can choose to poke small holes in the top for ventilation, or open the container once a week. You only want to do a quick open and close of the container. You also want to provide a hydrometer to monitor temp and humidity during the incubation process.



-Hygrometer

Transferring eggs to incubator- Now that you know how to make your own incubator lets talk about properly transferring your eggs to your incubator. When your female lays her eggs, you want to transfer them to your incubator. When transferring try not to roll the eggs around when doing so. You want to move them in the same position that they were laid in. If you roll them around you risk separating the embryo from the egg wall. This could cause the egg to go bad so you want to be careful when transferring the eggs.

Next thing you want to do is make a little indent in the hatch medium to place the egg in. this will keep the eggs from rolling around in the container. Last thing to do is ensure the humidity and temps are right and wait for them to hatch!



Making hatchling setups- Now that your eggs are incubating you will need to get the hatchlings setup ready. You can make a simple hatchling setup out of a smaller storage container, mesh, and hiding decor. To make the setup, you want to cut 2 nice size holes about 2-3 inches across on either side of your container. When you get those cut, you want to cut out a slightly larger circle out of mesh to glue onto the openings of the holes. This will give you great ventilation for your hatchlings.

Once that is done you want to get some paper towels to put in the bottom. Last thing you will need is a small cork bark round for a hiding place and some fake plants as well. You can also provide a very small bowl like a bottle cap for food in the container.





Hatchling setups.

What to do when the eggs hatch- When your crested geckos hatch from their eggs, before transferring them to their new set up, you want to insure that there aren't any disabilities with your new hatchling. If there are assess what it is and take to a vet if needed. If they don't have disabilities and are healthy you can transfer them to a temporary setup before transferring them to their hatchling setup.

Why transfer to a temporary container?- You want to transfer them to a temp container to help them adjust and allow them to have their first shed. You can make a temp container from a deli cup with a damp paper towel, and some foliage for cover. After about 3 days you can transfer them to their permanent hatchling set up after they had their first shed.



Hatchling care- When your hatchlings emerge from their egg and they are transferred to their temporary setup in the deli cup, you want to wait about 3 days after they hatch to offer food.

What do you feed them?- Two of the most used diets are Pangea and Repashy. These are a powder diet great for your geckos and full of the nutrients they need. You also want to feed them insects once to twice a week. Some good insects would be Dubia roaches, Crickets, red runners, or mealworms. Mealworms should be fed in moderation due to their high fat content. Switching up these options can help give them a variety of different nutrients.

How many times do I feed them?- For hatchlings you want to feed every other day to every two days. It really depends on what works best for you. When you feed you always want to be sure to check to ensure they have eaten the next day as well as take any old food out. You

NEVER want to keep insects that they haven't eaten lose in their setup. Some insects can bring serious harm to your gecko if left unattended.

How often do I give water?- For water you can keep a small bottle cap of water in their set up at all times. You don't want to give them to big of a bowl because you can risk them drowning.You want to be sure that you give spring or filtered water and never tap. Tap can cause water toxicity and could end up killing your geckos. You can also just let them lick the droplets off the side of their enclosure when you mist their enclosure.

How often should I mist?- You ideally want to mist their enclosure every day or even twice a day depending on humidity levels. You want the humidity to spike into the high 90s when you first mist but you want their enclosure to dry out around the 50s during the drying out period. If the enclosure hasn't dried out to the 50s, you want to only mist a corner of their enclosure to allow them to drink.

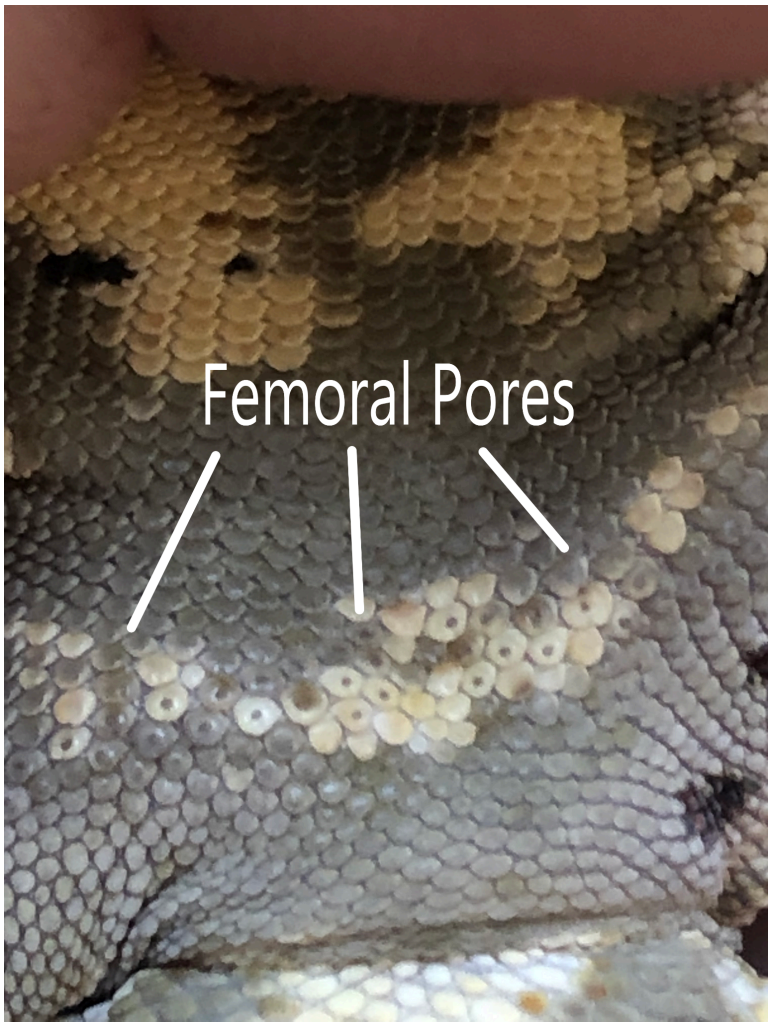
Why does it need to dry out?- Letting the enclosure dry out into the 50s daily will help prevent mold from forming along with other issues that the geckos can experience if they are kept to humid or wet all the time.

How to sex your hatchlings?- When it comes to sexing hatchlings it can be trickier than sexing adults. You typically can't tell their gender until they are 4-5 months old or 10-15g. At this age males start to develop their Hemipenal bulge.

What is a Hemipenal bulge?- The hemipenal bulge is what developes as a male crested gecko begins to mature. This looks like two small

bumps underneath the geckos vent at the base of the tail. This is where they store their hemipenis. Males will also show femoral pores around this age.

What are femoral pores?- These pores are found on male geckos. Their main primary function is to excrete a waxy substance to mark territories, as well as a pheromone to attract mates. These pores look like small black dots in the middle of the scale. These pores will form a line between the legs or otherwise known as girdle. These pores will show up before the hemipenal bulge and are looked for when sexing young crested geckos. These scales will appear shiny and will overlap each other. Females will lack these pores, but they can show Pseudo-pores.





What are Pseudo-pores?- These are fake pores that can show up on females. There won't be as many of these and they do not have any function to them. These pores will be scattered and not as prominent as that of the males Femoral pores. Females scales will also be more rounded and spread out than males. Females scales won't overlap each other

Thankyou for taking the time to read this guide and I hope this info helps you and your future breeding!



Crested gecko care

Crested geckos are one of my personal favorite reptiles to own. Between their docile nature and amazing different morphs, its hard to not like these guys. When choosing your own crested gecko knowing how to care for them properly is key to a healthy happy gecko. This section will discuss, proper care, enclosures, food, and more. Before talking about care lets give a little background info on these amazing reptiles.

Where do crested geckos come from?- Crested geckos hail from an island called New Caledonia. These geckos were rediscovered in the late 1990s. Before being rediscovered they were thought to have gone extinct. Since being rediscovered they have become a popular pet in the exotic pet trade. These geckos are arboreal and live most of their lives in trees. These guys can only be found in the rainforest of New Caledonia hiding amongst the canopy.



What tank is needed for crested geckos?- As mentioned, these geckos are arboreal and because of this needs an enclosure that is tall instead of long. The enclosure size will depend on how big your crested gecko is.

How big does the enclosure need to be?- Hatchling geckos that are, 1g-10g, should be kept in a 6qt or larger tub with paper towels and hiding places. This will allow you to monitor their poop and be sure that they are finding their food.

For juvenile crested geckos that are between 10g-30g, you want an exclosure that measures 12x12x18. Adult crested geckos can be kept in a 12x12x18; I personally keep them in enclosures that are 18x18x24.

Supplies for the enclosure- Now that you have your enclosure, you need everything that goes in it. First thing you need is the bedding for your enclosure.

What bedding is good to use?- Some of the most well known beddings are coco fiber, bioactive soil, and Reptisoil. You can also use paper towels for easy clean up. What ever option you chose works well for crested geckos.





Decor for the set-up- Now that you know what substrate to get let's move onto the decor. Crested geckos love lots of hiding places. Being sure to provide these places is important for your gecko. Some of the best ways to do this is to use fake plants, vines, branches and cork rounds. My favorite place to get fake plants for cheap is hobby lobby. You won't find a better selection than there. You do want to avoid heavily dyed plants as the dye can start to run when misting your eclosure.

Pet smart and chewy have some great options for cork rounds and vines for your enclosure. I do suggest purchasing some suction cup hooks to help secure your fake plants and vines to the wall of the enclosure. This will also alow you to create more coverage and hiding places.

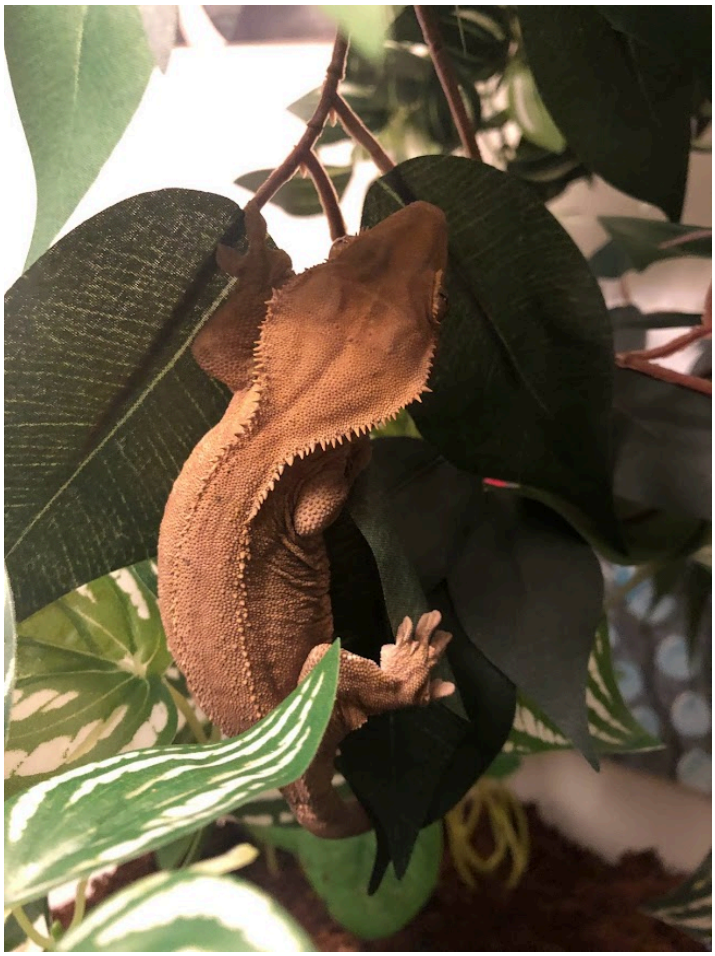




Adding your new crested gecko- When you get your set up ready for your crested gecko, it's time to add your new addition into their enclosure. It is important that when you add your new gecko that you allow them to adjust to their new enclosure for about a week before handling them.

Why is is important for them to adjust?- This step is important for your gecko so that they have some time to explore their new surroundings and find their water/feeding stations. By letting them adjust without handling them will also reduce their stress while they are getting used to a new environment.

If you skip this step and try to handle or mess with them right away this could lead to them becoming more stressed and even causing them not to eat or drink. It's very exciting when you get a new pet but it is important to let them settle in before enjoying and giving them some love.



What do crested geckos eat?- Now that yout have introduced your new addition to their enclosure let's talk about diets. The most popular diets for these guys is Pangea or Repashy. Both these diets includes Vitamins and nutrients that your gecko needs. Insects should be offered along side these diets.

Calcium without D3 can be supplemented once a month or when you notice their calcium sacs are low, located towards the back of the mouth.

How often do I feed?- How often you feed determines on how big your gecko is. Hatchling to Juveniles should be fed about every other day to every 2 days. Whichever is easier on you. Adult crested geckos should be feed every 2-3 days. You will want to offer insects about once-twice a week for all crested geckos. When feeding be sure to remove all old food and live insects left over after 24 hours. Leaving live insects can cause serious harm to your crested gecko.

What kind of insects do I feed?- Some great feeder insects for them are crickets, Dubia roaches, and Red runner roaches. Switching up these options will give your gecko a great variety of nutrients and will prevent them from getting bored. Some other okay options are butter worms and meal worms. These should only be fed on rare occasions since they are very high in fat content.

Misting the enclosure- Now that we've discussed diets let's discuss the importance of misting. You should ideally mist the enclosure once- twice a day depending on humidity levels. You want to mist using spring water or distilled, NEVER tap. Tap water can cause water toxicity in smaller animals and death due to the chemicals in tap. The only exception are those who use well water filtered through a reptile safe filter.

When you mist you want your humidity levels to spike to around the high 90s. You want to allow the tank to dry out over the next 24 hours into the 50s. You only want to mist twice a day if the humidity falls to quickly. Keeping the humidity high all the time can cause mold, respiratory illness, and other health issues for your gecko. A good way to track these levels is to use a hydrometer in your enclosure.

What is a hydrometer?- A hydrometer is a device used to keep track of both humidity and temperature. It is important to have one in each enclosure so that you can monitor their surroundings and keep your geckos happy and healthy.



-Hydrometer

What temps do they need to stay at?- Crested geckos are sensitive to high temps, so your temps should be around 68-75 degrees fahrenheit. If your temps spike over 80 degrees this could be fatal to your gecko by causing a heat stroke.

Are lights needed for crested geckos?- Crested geckos do not require any heat lights but they do need a day/night light schedule. If you have your gecko in a room without a window or in a dark room, you can provide a fluorescent light bulb. You ideally want 10-12 hours of light for a day/night light schedule. If you do use the fluorescent light bulb, it can cause the temp to spike 2 degrees so be sure to monitor your temps

while using this light source. If you do need to use a heat source, a deep heat projector can be used as long as it is hooked up to a thermostat to ensure the temps are in the safe range. NEVER USE HEAT PADS ON THE GLASS! Heat pads and heat rocks are very dangerous for these guys due to their soft skin. It's easy to burn these guys with these sources.

How often do I give water?- You have two options for water with your crested gecko. You can choose to leave spring water in their enclosure at all times or you can choose to get them on a water schedule when you mist. I do the second option because I've personally found this to keep them hydrated better than just standing water. The movement of water promotes them to drink and this mimics their natural habitat in Caledonia.

How often do I clean their enclosure?- This will depend on how much poop there is. I deep clean their enclosures every month by taking out all their decorations and cleaning any poop on them. You also want to pick up any poop in the substrate as well. If you use coco fiber you will need to re wet the bedding when you clean. Make sure not to soak it but get it a bit moist to keep the humidity from becoming to low.

Things you can expect as new time owners

Hiding- It is very common for your new crested gecko to go into hiding when you first bring them home. It takes time for your new addition to adjust. Crested geckos are also Nocturnal and do most of their exploring at night. It's common for them to hide away during the day and come out only at night

Not seeing them eat- When you first get your crested gecko it can be hard to tell if they are eating or not. They usually don't eat in front of people and they don't eat a ton either. A good rule to know if they are eating is if they are pooping. If they are pooping they are eating. It can take several days for them to make a bowl movement.

Jumping and bolting- Crested geckos are arboreal meaning they spend most of their time high up in trees. Because of this they are good jumpers. They will jump off your hand if given the chance. Younger crested geckos tend to jump more than adults, but this isn't always the case. Sometimes they will also bolt especially if they aren't used to handling. When first handling your gecko do it over a soft surface or sitting down to prevent fall injury.

Adult Male behavior- Adult male crested geckos can bite due to their mating behavior. Sometimes they will bite anything that moves in an attempt to mate. For the most part the bites don't hurt but every gecko is different. These guys will also show their hemipenes, Double penises, While cleaning them. Don't be alarmed if you see this, as long as they go back and nothing looks off they are just fine.

Dropping tails- crested geckos can drop their tails due to different reasons. The difference with crested geckos are that their tails do not grow back. They will usually only do this if they get spooked. Sometimes you can't avoid this as they will just randomly do it even if you aren't in the room. This usually isn't a problem as long as they heal fine after dropping their tail.

After dropping their tail, it can still move for a while after so don't be alarmed when this happens. Fun fact, If you have a gecko that drops their tail they are known as frog butts in the community.

Issues you can run into and how to prevent them- So the last thing to look out for with these guys are some common issues you can run into with owning crested geckos. These issues would include: Floppy Tail Syndrome, Respiratory Infection, Stuck Shed, Metabolic bone disease, Tail rot, and impaction

Floppy Tail Syndrome- This Syndrome is when the crested geckos tail flops over to a 90 degree angle or off to the side when they are upside down on the glass. This can be caused by genetics, decreased bone density, and husbandry. A way to prevent this is to insure that the geckos are getting adequate calcium in their diet as well as buying your crested gecko from a reputable breeder.

You can also provide other climbing options than just the sides of the tank. Unfortunately FTS isn't reversible if it's progressed to a certain degree but if you do what you can to prevent it, you shouldn't have to worry much



Respiratory infection- This infection is caused by housing crested geckos in improper humidity settings or temps. With improper humidity, it can cause fungal or bacteria growth in the enclosure. Dirty enclosures can also cause this by weakening the crested geckos immune system and becoming more prone to getting sick. Certain parasites are also able to cause this due to poor habitat conditions.

Symptoms of this include: Difficulty breathing, open mouth panting, decreased appetite, frequent coughing or unusual sounds, lethargic behavior, bloated or hard abdomen, excess mucus, and sudden weight loss. If this infection is left untreated it could lead to death, Treatment includes a visit to the vet for antibiotics. You can prevent this by maintaining proper humidity levels, temps and keeping their enclosure clean.





Stuck shed- This is caused by improper humidity settings in your enclosure. If the enclosure is to dry then it can lead to stuck shed when it's time for them to shed. This can lead to circulation being cut off from the toes or tail, depending on where it is. This can lead to them losing these toes or tail. You can prevent this by ensuring your humidity level is where it needs to be.

If you do end up with stuck shed you can help them by giving them a 10-15 minute soak in a container with some paper towels soaked in room temp water. After you can try to remove the shed with a dry Q-tip. You can repeat this process once a day until the shed is gone.



Metabolic Bone Disease- This disease is caused when you don't supplement enough calcium or D3 in their diet. Symptoms of this is wavy tail, soft jaw, curved limbs, lethargy, and loss of appetite. This disease causes the muscles and bones to become weak and deformed

over time. This disease isn't curable but it can be prevented and symptoms treated with calcium supplements and other medications. You can prevent this by ensuring that they are getting enough calcium in their diet.

The Pangea and Repashy diets have the calcium and vitamins you need. The only time you will need to supplement calcium without D3, since the diets have the calcium with D3, is if their calcium sacs are not full looking. You can check their calcium sacs in the back of their throat by firmly but gently holding your geckos and rubbing the sides of their mouth until they open their mouth. These sacs will look full and white if they have enough calcium.

Impaction- This is when the digestive tract gets blocked causing them not to pass stool. this is caused by several reasons which include: Ingesting loose substrate, Feeding hard shelled insects, Feeding insects larger than the spacing between their eyes, dehydration, low temps, improper humidity, and nutritional deficiency. This is a serious condition that can cause death in your gecko if left untreated. Symptoms of impaction include: round belly, Weight loss, loss of appetite, absence of stool, straining when pooping, leg trembling, regurgitation, paralysis, tiredness and labored breathing.

This can be prevented by using safe substrate, Feeding the right size insects, full rounded diet, safe decorations, and correct temps and humidity.

Tail Rot- What is tail rot? Tail rot is when the tail gets infected causing the tissue to die off. This infection, if left untreated, can spread to your geckos organs causing them to shut down killing your gecko. Symptoms of tail rot include: The tip of the tail blackening, The tail does not shed, tail turns black and falls off, Crested gecko may lose appetite, Can cause

aggressiveness in crested geckos, Gecko starts hiding or behaving abnormally, and signs of pain and discomfort,

Tail rot can be caused due to a few different reasons. The tail gets injured, crushed, or cut and the infection enters the wound. Incomplete shed can cause tail rot by cutting off circulation. Incorrect temperatures can cause tail rot due to hyperthermia. Treatment for tail rot is removing the tail before the infection can spread by a medical professional. DO NOT ATTEMPT ON YOUR OWN!

I hope this guide helps you provide your new gecko with a happy and healthy life. Thankyou for taking the time to read for the health of your geckos.



Credit Page

I want to take the time to thank everyone who has helped provide pics, and information for this guide. I wouldn't of been able to put this together without your help. Thanks to everyone's help, This guide will be able to help people identify morphs, breed properly, and care for their geckos better than ever. I've met so many amazing people while putting this guide together and I encourage anyone who reads this guide to go and check out these amazing peoples pages.

Lakeside Geckos- https://www.instagram.com/lakesidegeckos/

Lovable Geckos- https://www.instagram.com/lovablegeckos/

Down To Lizard- https://www.instagram.com/down_to_lizard/

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Pure Gold Geckos- https://www.instagram.com/puregoldgeckos/

Fox Reptiles- https://sites.google.com/view/foxreptiles?pli=1

Tenny's Crested Geckos-
https://tennyscrestedgeckos.com/crested-gecko-morphs/