

African Fat-Tailed Gecko Care Sheet - Capital City Exotics

Please note the first 1-3 weeks your new AFT can be very shy when arriving in a new home. I always recommend covering all 3 sides of the new enclosure with brown paper or a visual barrier of your choice. Also helps to cover the front with a towel and only checking the temps/water/humid hide every other day while they are getting used to their new home. I do not recommend holding or touching your new gecko during this time. Once they start eating from their dish or tongs this tells you all is okay to start developing your new friendship.

***Thermostat controller** to regulate whatever heat source you choose. (You cannot skip this item) There are multiple options, just be sure to place the probe on the warm side of the enclosure.

*Heat sources can be personal preference. You can use under tank heat mat, Heat tape, Ceramic Heat emitter or a Deep Heat Projector. Most importantly you must utilize a controller for any of these choices.

***Laser-type Thermometer** does not have to be expensive. You will be able to spot check your temps with ease.

***Water Conditioner** - ZooMed Reptisafe

Size- 8-10" weight can vary from 40-100+ grams

LifeSpan- 15-20+ years

Housing- minimum size requirement 10 gallons. This will vary with every animal; some do fantastic in a huge environment and some will not. You have to provide a heat gradient for them and this cannot be done with anything smaller than a 10 gallon footprint. They will display the most natural behaviors in an environment they feel safe in and will appreciate the terrestrial space to explore.

Décor- AFT will utilize branches, leaves, caves and basically any reptile decorations you provide. I don't recommend anything with small openings where they could possibly get stuck and not be able to safely exit.

Heating- Daytime temperature gradient (Warm Side 92° - 95°) (Cool side 75°) It is possible to night drop temps no lower than 72°

Lighting- AFT are by nature crepuscular meaning they are most active at dawn and dusk. If you choose lighting I would recommend a 10-12 hour light cycle with a timer. With a UVB rating of 5.0 or specified type for shade dwelling reptiles. As they are a shy gecko by nature a bright light source will have them retreating in their hides until it is off. Using the wrong rated lighting can result in severe burns on your gecko.

Humidity- Always provide a warm humid hide(plastic/deli container with lid & hole cut out for access) filled with a 50/50 of coco fiber and peat moss on the warm side of the enclosure, misted weekly to maintain dampness. There is no need to keep the entire enclosure at peak humidity as long as you provide a hide.

(Other keepers have witnessed AFT biting sphagnum moss therefore I **DO NOT** recommend using it as it could create a problem if consumed)

Substrate- there are many different options; non adhesive shelf liner, paper towels, slate tiles or paper liners. In the beginning I recommend a type of non bio active option. That way you will be able to track waste. When you both pass the honeymoon stage (eating freely from a dish or tongs) you can always switch to bio active substrate for geckos 1yr or older. There are many commercial bagged products out there now. I personally use a 50/40/10 coco fiber, peat moss, and play sand mix when keeping a terrestrial gecko bio active.

Food- AFT raised in my care are started early with a plastic escape proof feeding dish. The food items offered should be no larger than the space between their eyes. Your new gecko has been fed many different types of insects from hatch. Dubia & Lobster roaches, Superworms, Mealworms, Hornworms and Repashy Grub Pie/Lugarti Insectivore Gel diets. I mix up and pour into molds and feed from tongs. I also on occasion 4-Health Premium Grain Free Chicken or Lamb dinner(Pick out the peas and toss) I slice it up in strips and offer on tongs. Variety is best for a long healthy life for your new pet. (As a personal preference I do not feed crickets. I'm sure they would eat them as well) I do not recommend leaving food items such as superworms or crickets in your pets enclosure as there have been cases of bites to animals from these insects by other keepers.

Gut loading insects to insure you are feeding most nutritious food for your new gecko you will need to feed your feeders. There are many brands to choose from, Repashy Bug Burger is an option. For a moisture source I recommend organic carrots.

Supplements- Dust prey every other feeding. Provide a small cap/dish of this supplement for your gecko change weekly. Repashy Calcium Plus. Another option is 2:1 mix of Osteoform SA and Vionate. (Refrigerate bottles to maintain potency)

ExoTerra Electrolyte & Vitamin D3 liquid drops as directed on bottle. I add this to their water to ensure they are getting all the minerals needed for proper calcium absorption.

Handling and Temperament- AFT are very calm and tolerant once they are adults. Babies can be nervous and not appreciate handling until you build trust. Try not to approach your gecko from above, scoop from the side or let them walk onto your hand. If you see your gecko hiss or wave its tail when you attempt to interact. You should slowly stop and not continue your actions. He/She is telling you to back off and does not want you in its space. I do touch tails as they are raised in my care. I do this to desensitize them and get them used to all manners of gentle holding.

Shedding- AFT once full grown will shed about every 3 weeks. You will notice them turning white/grey and the next day be bright and colorful again. I do not recommend holding or taking your pet out when they are about to shed. Allow them to remove their own shed and never do it for them. After they have shed you should always inspect their claws for any stuck pieces. Gently rub water or food grade coconut oil on the affected toes with a qtip this should help dislodge the stuck shed. It is most important you provide a warm wet hide for a successful shed in your geckos environment.

Cohabitation- While some may say you can keep multiple animals together I never recommend it in any situation. They look at another gecko as a drain on the resources. All can be fine until one day it's not. Then you have missing limbs or one severely injured pet. Imagine living in a studio apartment with your best friend. Eventually disagreements will happen.

*These are my methods. As the old saying goes, there are many roads that lead to Rome. I mark the topics in **bold** that you should follow as close as possible. If you have any questions or concerns please reach out to me. I wish for a long happy relationship for you and your new gecko. My help and advice is available anytime after sale.

I do recommend watching Dav Kaufman's video on YouTube. He ventures to West Africa where these beautiful animals are in the wild. This will give you a better understanding of their natural instincts. Where they live and what the temperatures and climate are in the wild.

https://youtu.be/uDN_ZQptpCo

Amazon list example can be found here <https://tinyurl.com/2ydvc3ks>

Websites for supplies

<https://www.reptilesupplyco.com>

<https://beanfarm.com>

<https://www.reptilebasics.com>

<https://www.snakediscoverystore.com>

<https://dubiaroaches.com>

<https://www.rainbowmealworms.net>