



**Photo Credit: University of California-Berkeley*

Flying Gecko (*Ptychozoon/Gekko kuhli*)

Geckos that Glide

Flying geckos are a unique gecko species found in northeastern Cambodia, southern Thailand, Myanmar, and northeastern India, to the Malaysian Peninsula, the Nicobar Islands, and into Indonesia and Singapore. These geckos are primarily an arboreal, nocturnal species that use their highly specialized webbed tails and digits to glide or parachute among trees for distances up to 200 feet! They also have highly cryptic coloration that helps these geckos camouflage, or blend in with tree bark or rainforest mosses and lichens extremely well. These geckos are a nocturnal species with quite cryptic, and variable coloration and appearances.

They may range in color from light to dark brown, grayish or grayish brown, tan, to yellowish or yellowish brown, oftentimes with darker markings on their dorsal surface, and highly adapted webbed toes and feet and an elaborate network of membranes surrounding their heads, necks, limbs, and tails. There are about eight (8) recognized flying gecko species in the genus *Ptychozoon*. However, *P. kuhli*, commonly known as the Flying Gecko, or sometimes Parachute Gecko, is the most commonly kept and imported species.

Taxonomy

Life: All living, physical, and animate entities

Domain: Eukaryota

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum/Sub Phylum: Chordata/Vertebrata

Class: Reptilia

Order: Squamata

Suborder: Lacertilia

Infraorder: Gekkota

Family: Gekkonidae

Genus: *Ptychozoon/Gekko*

Species: *Ptychozoon/Gekko kuhli**

**Taxonomy subject to change and revision.*

Lifespan and Longevity

If provided the proper care, flying geckos can attain longevity of at least 5 to 10 years or potentially more in captivity.

Distribution and Habitat

The flying gecko is a unique species of medium to large, arboreal gecko indigenous to southern to southeastern Asia. More specifically, this species can range from northeastern Cambodia,

southern Thailand, Myanmar, and northeastern India, to the Malaysian Peninsula, the Nicobar Islands, and into Indonesia and Singapore. Within this range, flying geckos occupy primarily arboreal to semi-arboreal environments, including tropical to sub-tropical forests, woodlands, cliff areas, and rural to suburban residential areas, or other areas of human habitation, often along tree trunks or interior and exterior walls and other sidings of houses and other buildings.

Origin/History

Gekko kuhli (Stejneger, 1902).

Early on, flying geckos were rare in the pet trade, but by the 1980's they became readily available. There would be some captive-breeding of these unusual geckos; however, much of their availability today remains wild-caught. These geckos are hardy and prolific breeders, and would be inexpensive to purchase, but still required some level of foresight, particularly when it came to new or inexperienced reptile keepers and pet owners.

Experience Level Required

Novice/Beginner to Intermediate/Moderate.

Size

Flying geckos are fairly large geckos which can range in size from about 4.0 to 8.0 inches in total snout-to-tail length as adults. Snout to vent length of adults ranges from about 3.4 to 4.2 inches in snout-to-vent length (SVL).

Housing and Enclosure

Enclosure System: Primarily Arboreal. Housing must be sealed and escape proof, and the size of the enclosure recommended will depend on the age and size of the gecko. For hatchlings up to 6 months or so, a 5 gallon tall aquarium, terrarium, or similar enclosure is recommended. Once a gecko reaches or exceeds six months or so, a 10 to 20 gallon tall terrarium or enclosure should be used. Flying geckos are arboreal, and height is more important than floor space. Provide plenty of live or artificial plants, branches, cork bark, or other furnishings for ample climbing and hiding opportunities. Substrates that retain and hold humidity well are recommended, and naturalistic substrates can include sphagnum moss and fir shavings, natural moss, or similar substrates. To maintain humidity and hydration, daily or regular misting is necessary. They will drink the condensation from the enclosure's furnishings and walls, and a small water dish can also be provided, and must be kept clean, but will usually be seldom used.

Temperature, Lighting, and Humidity

Flying geckos are a primarily tropical species that does best at humidity levels between 60 and 80%. Ideal temperatures for flying geckos range from a gradient of 75 to 86 degrees F ambient temperature and an 85 to 90 degree F basking spot during daytime photoperiods of 12 to 14 hours. Nighttime temperatures can be allowed to drop slightly below this range using a 24 hour under tank heating pad or nighttime infrared spectrum form of lighting and heating. 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 minimum every 2 to 3 months. More specific lighting, heating, and humidity product suggestions and recommendations that can best suit one's needs, as well as those of one's animals can be given as well.

Feeding, Diet, and Nutrition

Insectivorous; In the wild, flying geckos are insectivorous, and will eat a large array of insects and other small invertebrates. In captivity, feed flying geckos a variety of appropriately sized

feeder insects such as crickets, roaches, mealworms, superworms, fruit fly cultures, or waxworms. Feeder insects should be gut-loaded in order to increase their optimal nutritional value. Flying geckos also require additional calcium and vitamin D3 supplementation 1 to 2 times weekly or as otherwise directed for optimal health and development. This is in order to prevent Metabolic Bone Disease (MBD) and other growth and nutritional deficiencies. Their overall feeding frequency will depend on the age, size, and overall health of your animal. Food can be offered by hand or in a small dish mounted off of the enclosure floor for arboreal animals. Use care as to not overfeed them, as obesity and other health related issues can become an issue. More specific dietary and supplementary product suggestions and recommendations that can best suit one's needs, as well as those of one's animals can be given as well.

Handling

Flying geckos are a fragile and delicate skinned species and can also be fast moving and skittish. Therefore, handling should be discouraged or be limited to periods whenever necessary. If handling is absolutely required or desired, always handle the animal gently and deliberately but do not drop or injure the animal. As with many geckos and other lizards, they can also drop their tails when frightened or handled roughly. Take care to not grab your gecko by its tail or it may detach if your gecko perceives you as a predator or a threat.

****Also be sure to practice basic cleanliness and hygiene associated with proper husbandry after touching or handling any animals or animal enclosures to prevent the possibility of contracting salmonellosis or any other zoonotic pathogens****

Contact

Authored by Eric Roscoe. For any additional questions, comments, and/or concerns regarding this animal, group of animals, or this care sheet, please email and contact:

Eric.S.Roscoe@gmail.com

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