

Tokay gecko

Gekko gecko

Order: Squamata

Family: Gekkonidae

Description: 10-12 inches long. Greenish gray color with gray and orange-brown spots covering the body. The body is slender, topped by a large head. The eyes are prominent in all species and the gecko's vision is excellent. Broad fleshy toes with inner folds.

Special Features:

- **Senses** – Just like snakes, they can also use their tongue to smell. They have a special organ on the roof of their mouth called a Jacobson's organ, which takes scent particles from the tongue and relays messages about the surroundings to the brain.
- **Call** – Name comes from their loud call.
- **Life Span** – Life span is an average of 10 years, but they can live for 20 years in captivity.
- **Behavior** – Solitary lifestyle, with territories protected by males.
- **Activity** – Nocturnal
- **Reproduction** – Oviparous or egg laying

Range and Habitat: From Southeast Asia and Malayan Isles. Live in tropical and subtropical environments. Found among vegetation in rainforests, on mountainsides, on rocky outcrops, and in deserts. Likes to live in bushes, trees and on or around rocks. Now thrives in South Florida, the Caribbean, and Hawaii.

Wild Diet: Tokays will eat anything they can catch and chew; crickets, insects, baby mice, baby birds, and small lizards.

Reproduction: Oviparous. Eggs are deposited on the underside of a rock or piece of bark. Females lay 2 or more eggs at a time. Hatchlings are

about 2-3" long. When hatched they eat their outer covering of skin. They become sexually mature at a year old.

Predators: Snakes and man

Notes:

- Tokays do not like to be handled, and they readily bite the hand that feeds them. Therefore, Tokay geckos only make good pets for those who enjoy watching their pets and not handling them. Also, Tokay geckos can be really noisy pets.
- Many Tokay geckos have escaped or been "set free" by their unhappy owners. Now they are an established, invasive species in South Florida.
- Most common around buildings, but also threatens native species in the Everglades.
- Florida now has more non-indigenous species of lizards than indigenous ones.
- The Tokay gecko arrived in Florida through multiple releases.