

OVERVIEW						
<p>The Madagascar panther or ground gecko (<i>Paroedura picta</i>) is known by many names. It has been established in herpetoculture for quite some time and over the years it has also been referred to as the panther gecko, the ocelot gecko, the big-headed gecko and the Malagasy leopard gecko. It is even more commonly called "the pictus gecko", based on the former spelling of its species name.</p>						
ENVIRONMENT						
Conditions »	Day Temp	78-85°F	Night Temp	70-80°F	Humidity	50-60%
Heat Source »	Belly heat; thermostat-controlled undertank heat mat at one end of enclosure.					
HOUSING		<p>A pair or harem group of panther geckos can be housed in 20 long aquarium or similarly sized terrarium with a tight-fitting lid. Although adults do not climb well and cannot scale the smooth sides of an enclosure, hatchlings and juveniles have been known to climb glass. A slightly moistened mixture of coconut fiber or peat moss and sand can be used as substrate and cork bark slabs and inverted plant saucers make for suitable retreats. A potted plant such as pothos and dry oak leaves can be used to create additional cover and add beauty to the terrarium. A small, shallow water dish should be offered at the cool end of the cage.</p> <p>Young panther geckos should be housed in small escape-proof containers using a paper towel for substrate, a shallow portion cup (0.5 oz. Solo cup) for water and a moist hiding place made from a small margarine or similar container containing damp paper towel or moist orchid moss.</p> <p>Undertank heaters are perfect for terrestrial gecko terrariums, and a <i>P. picta</i> enclosure should have a thermal gradient with 85°F measured at the warm end. UVB lighting is not necessary for these nocturnal geckos, but full spectrum lighting can be used to create a natural photoperiod and illuminate any live plants used. A light daily misting is recommended to maintain humidity in the terrarium and encourage the geckos to drink.</p>				
DIET		<p><i>P. picta</i> are known for their ravenous appetites. Crickets, black soldier fly larvae, small roaches, waxworms, and young superworms are all readily consumed by adults. Young panther geckos require tiny food such as one or two week old crickets. Food items should be offered daily and alternated so that several different insects are offered each week. The use of a calcium supplement several times a week is vital, particularly for the prolific females. A small amount of calcium supplement containing vitamin D3 should be offered in a shallow jar lid for breeding females to consume as needed..</p>				