

## Golden tegu



Adequate temperature		
	Hot spot	Cold spot
Day temperature	33 °C	26 °C
Night temperature	24 °C	22 °C

### Main Features :

Also nicknamed the black and white tegu, this reptile sports these colors all over the body, limbs and tail. The white background is covered with black spots or thin transverse bands. The average size of an adult tegu is 145 cm, and the latter can live between 20 and 30 years. The male can reach a body weight of 8 kg! This reptile is solitary, so it is not recommended to put several tegus in the same habitat.

### Captivity:

The golden tegu should have a room specially designed for him and this room should be equipped with a heating system and a lighting system emitting ultraviolet rays. It is imperative for the tegu to have a pool of water where he can swim at his convenience. The degree of humidity (60%) and the temperature (see the table above) must be carefully monitored to preserve the health of your tegu. To maintain the proper temperature, the use of a heat lamp not accessible for the latter is necessary. The carpet must be installed under the flooring to prevent direct contact. If the animal has access to the heating source, the risk of burns is very high. A reptile does not feel the heat on its skin, it is only once it is too late that it feels the wound. Due to the degree of humidity and the presence of the water basin, it is not recommended to put it in a room with gypsum walls. The tegu must have a UVA-UVB lamp in its habitat! This lamp is essential to its good health because it provides a source of calcium that is normally provided by the sun. This lamp should work 10-12h per day and be changed every 6 months to maintain its effectiveness! At night, this lamp must be off, unlike the heat lamp which must work all day. In order to better control the time of exposure to UV light, the degree of humidity and to maintain an adequate temperature, it is strongly recommended to obtain a thermometer and a hygrometer to better control the variants. The ideal is to get a thermostat that will regulate the temperature and humidity and a timer to better control the UV lighting time, but it is important to make sure that it always works, even after several years! For the substrate (bottom mat), a grass mat may be ideal as an option as it is easy to clean. If you use this kind of carpet, it is important not to install it on a non-washable surface, such as a wood floor. A gravel or sand substrate is not recommended due to the risk of the animal ingesting this

product, which can cause intestinal blockage. For all these reasons, the tégu is not a reptile to adopt when one lives in an apartment.

### **Food:**

The young tegu is essentially insectivorous, while once an adult, he is omnivorous. They feed on vertebrates, invertebrates and plants: amphibians, lizards, snails, eggs, fish, etc. In captivity, you can offer him mice, rats, chicks, eggs, white meat, fruits and vegetables. The frequency of meals is from one to two times a week. If your pet tolerates it, you can give the dead animals (from where you know the source) to minimize the risk of injury. The addition of calcium and multivitamins is essential to his diet, as are all reptiles. It is recommended to add 2 to 3 times a week on its food before offering them to your companion.



### **Frequent health problems:**

- **Metabolic Bone Disease:** The lizard may suffer from anorexia, tremors, swelling around the bones, lethargy or bone malformations due to old fractures.
- **Infections:** Infections can occur in the mouth (stomatitis), on the skin (bacterial or fungal) or in the form of abscess. This condition is often the cause of poor nutrition, excess moisture or poor hygiene.
- **Parasites:** A lizard can catch parasites in many ways, such as having been outdoors, boarding or living in a pet store or from their live food (mice, insects, etc.). If the animal is not treated following the appearance of parasites, it could become anemic and die. Parasites feed on your pet's blood, where they can find the nutrients they need for survival.
- **Moult problem:** A reptile moults several times a year. The moult consists of a change of skin. The animal grows up and the scales become too tight on it. He develops new ones and the old ones have to leave. A moult problem occurs when the degree of humidity is not adequate. It is important not to shoot the moult!
- **Cloacal Prolapse:** A cloacal prolapse is an externalization of part of the digestive system of your reptile. It is therefore possible to see part of the intestine of your reptile out its cloaca (opening that connects the anus and the reproductive system).

As with all animals, it is recommended that an examination be conducted after the purchase of a new reptile and an annual check is required. The annual exam helps prevent health problems that may occur and thus save the life of your pet. If in doubt, a visit to the veterinarian is required! A reptile, whatever it is, will hide its symptoms so as not to become an easy prey for predators (humans). At the slightest change in behavior, contact your veterinarian.