

East Bay Vivarium

1827-C 5th Street
Berkeley, Ca 94710
(510) 841-1400

<http://www.eastbayvivarium.com>



Monitor lizards roam from tropical to desert habitats in the old world. Monitors are active, alert and intelligent predators. They range in size from twelve inches to over 10 feet in length.

Tegus are new world lizards from tropical to savannah habitats. Tegus are strong, smart and sometimes lazy omnivores that range in adult size from twelve inches to almost four feet in length. In captivity both monitors and tegus live from 10-25 years

Habitat:

Temperature: Establish a range of temperature from 100°F (hot end) to 75-80°F (cool end). It is important to offer your animal a choice of conditions at all times.

Water: Mist tropical species at least once per day. Additionally, fresh water should be available at all times. Water will need to be changed frequently. Desert animals should be misted occasionally.

Bedding: Screened pine, peat moss, orchid bark, and coco fiber are all suitable substrates. Desert species should be housed on dry substrate and tropical species on moist substrate.

Cage Decorations: Provide your monitor or tegu with a hide box (a warm dark place for your lizard to sleep), a basking rock and branch beneath the heat source to help with digestion. Babies and gravid females should be housed with a moss box on the hot end of the cage. The moss box should be full of damp peat moss, sand or coco fiber.

Tank Size: Baby monitors and tegus should be kept in a 15-30 gallon tank. Adults should be kept in tanks appropriate for their size.

Special Lighting: It is essential to provide your monitor or tegu with a UVB light source. These lights simulate natural sunlight and aid your monitor or tegu to metabolize key vitamins and minerals. UVB lighting is essential for preventing calcium deficiencies.

Feeding:

Feed Daily: Offer babies food at least once per day. Food should include crickets, mealworms, wax worms, roaches and rodents. Adults should be 3 times a week. Tegus should also be offered vegetable plates. Vegetable plates should include leafy greens and large amounts of tropical fruits.

Vitamins: Lightly dust all foods with a 50/50 mixture of calcium supplements and vitamin supplements. These items are an essential part of your monitor or tegu's diet. Without them, your animal may develop vitamin and calcium deficiencies, which are ultimately fatal.

Maintenance:

Shedding: It is important that your monitor or tegu shed its skin completely, especially the skin on the fingers and toes. Incomplete sheds over a period of time can lead to the loss of digits. We recommend soaking your monitor or tegu once a week in a shallow bath of tepid water for 20 minutes, and then peel any unshed skin by hand.

Cleaning: Spot clean individual messes and replace with fresh substrate daily. A wide screen fish net is useful for sifting sand. Clean the entire cage bimonthly or when needed.

Clipping: You should clip your monitor or tegu's toenails every few weeks. Cut just the tip off with a pair of fingernail clippers.

Handling: Frequent handling is the best way to allow your monitor or tegu to feel comfortable under human care. However, do not handle your animal for the first week you own it. Make sure it is eating and well adjusted to its new home.

Problems: The first sign of an unhealthy animal is a lack of appetite. First check the cage temperatures and make sure that they are correct. If the environment is set-up properly and problems persist, please call the East Bay Vivarium for assistance.

Further Reading:

