



## Pamper your Fin, Fur or Feathered Family

...and your friends with Scales



Photo by Pisces Pet Emporium

## Tegu

*Tupinambis sp*

**Lifespan:** Up to 12 years.

**Size:** 36 to 48 inches.

**Sexing:** Males have looser jowls and throat skin than females.

**Enclosure:** Tegus do best in a longer tank that provides them with room to roam around and exercise. At the least, the tank should measure 6' by 2.5' by 2.5' with a tightly fit screen top. For a baby or hatchling, a standard 20-gallon tank with screen top is good. A large weight on the top or a lock is required to prevent your Tegu from escaping. ***Pisces recommends: ExoTerra All-Glass Terrariums.***

**Hiding/Climbing Spots:** Tegus love to roam; provide plenty of plants and branches for your Tegu to climb on. Provide a water dish large enough for the animal to curl its entire body into for bathing and to help with shedding.

**Humidity:** The enclosure should be well ventilated and misted well to keep the humidity high (60% to 80%) and to aid the process of shedding and prevent health problems. Use a hygrometer to maintain a constant humidity level.

**Substrate:** Repti-liner is the easiest to clean and the least likely to cause health problems, but loose forest substrate is fine, as long as the Tegu is about 2 feet long or larger. Do not use sand. Tegus can ingest sand, causing intestinal blockages. ***Pisces recommends: Exo-terra Repti-liner.***

**Heat:** Maintain a temperature of as low as 24 °C at night to as high as 38 °C during the day (75 °F to 100 °F). Use a heat bulb on one portion of the tank so the animal can escape the warm area if they need to. ***Pisces recommends: ExoTerra bulbs and fixtures.***

**UV Lighting:** Use of a full spectrum 5.0 bulb for 12 hours per day is required. Fluorescent bulbs lose effectiveness and need to be replaced every 6-8 months.

**Feeding:** A Tegu's diet should include crickets, worms, and fruits and vegetables (kale, green leaf or romaine lettuce, dandelion leaves, strawberries, grapes, blueberries, mango). Fruits should make only about 10 percent of their diet. Avoid any iceberg lettuce, spinach, broccoli, cauliflower or other bitter tasting vegetables as they impede the ability to take in vitamins. Babies must be fed multiple times a day until they are about six inches long without the tail. Juveniles should eat six to eight crickets and a salad everyday. Adults will eat as many crickets you give them; they can be fed 5-week-old crickets 2-3 times a week. Worms can be offered once or twice a week once they are large enough to take them. Once full size, Tegus can have an appropriately sized mouse as a treat up to twice per month.

**Vitamins & Supplements:** Every other feeding, dust crickets with a quality reptile vitamin and mineral powder. ***Pisces recommends: Repashy Calcium plus ICB***

**Handling:** Hatchlings and Babies are fragile and should be handled with caution. When they become Juveniles they can be handled frequently without trouble.

**Safe Handling of Reptiles\*:** As with all living creatures, reptiles can carry microorganisms (including Salmonella) which can make people ill. To reduce the chances of infection, always follow these safe handling steps:

- Always wash your hands thoroughly after you handle your pet, its food and anything it has touched.
- Keep your pet in a habitat designed for it; do not let your pet reptile roam around the home without proper supervision.
- Keep your pet, its food dishes and cage components out of the kitchen.
- Don't nuzzle or kiss your pet.
- Infants, children under 5 years of age, pregnant women, the elderly, and those with a compromised immune system have a greater risk of infection. Extra caution should be taken when they are in contact with any animal. Children under 5 should handle reptiles only under adult/parent supervision.

**Recommended Books:** Pisces recommends *Monitors and Tegus* (Barron's Books).

#### Recommended Supplies:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Glass terrarium</li> <li>❑ Screen top</li> <li>❑ Branches for climbing</li> <li>❑ Plants (live or artificial)</li> <li>❑ Misting bottle</li> <li>❑ Water dish</li> <li>❑ Repti-liner</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Heat Bulb &amp; Fixture</li> <li>❑ Fluorescent Light &amp; Fixture</li> <li>❑ Repashy Calcium plus ICB</li> <li>❑ Crickets</li> <li>❑ Thermometer</li> <li>❑ Hygrometer</li> </ul> |
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**Your New Pet:** It is the responsibility of any pet owner to provide their pet with regular veterinary care to maintain their pet's health and to prevent illness.

Should you experience any problems with your new pet, contact Pisces Pet Emporium. We will make every effort to assist you but we may refer you to a qualified veterinarian if the problem is beyond our ability to treat.

A pet is a large responsibility and should not be purchased without due consideration. Pets should never be released into the wild.



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*\*Safe handling information courtesy of PIJAC Canada*