

## Golden Tegu

Golden tegus are large reptiles that are for experienced reptile keepers. They are naturally aggressive but can be tamed over a long period of time and will become great companions. They range across northern South America and are mainly found in areas surrounding forests. In captivity they usually have a life span between 12 to 20 years.

Other names include the gold tegu, common tegu, black tegu, Colombian tegu or tiger lizard.



## Glossary

**Reptile** - A cold-blooded vertebrate with scaly skin.

**Amphibian** - A cold-blooded vertebrate that begins life as an aquatic animal and grows into a terrestrial adult with lungs.

**Terrestrial** - A ground dwelling animal.

**Arboreal** - An animal that lives in trees.

**Diurnal** - Awake in the day.

**Nocturnal**- Awake during the night.

**UVB** - Ultraviolet radiation.

**Colubrid** - A family of snakes.

**Hybrid** - Offspring from animals of different species.

**Morph** - Colourations created due to genetics.

**Musk** - Unpleasant odour released when an animal is stressed or feels threatened.

**Live plants are only available on special order**

If you require any further information, please ask our pet care advisors who will be very happy to help.

### Opening Times

Monday - Saturday: 9am - 6pm

Sunday: 9.30am - 4pm

### Chessington Garden Centre

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# Golden Tegu



## Care & Advice Sheet

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## Size & Housing

Most golden tegus reach between 1 ½ to 3 ½ foot in length as adults. They need plenty of space to run around in and are best suited in long, wooden vivariums. Although the enclosure will be their home, they should be taken out of the vivarium regularly if not daily for exercise. It is best to get a custom made enclosure for the adult's vivarium.

72 x 24 x 24" – Minimum for 1 Adult



## Substrate & Furnishings

Golden tegus can be housed on loose substrates such as orchid bark, rainforest barks, jungle earth or a mixture with soil based substrates as they like to burrow. Although ground dwelling lizards, they will appreciate ledges, branches and high areas to bask on that are large enough to support their weight. Artificial or live plants should also be used for decoration. Spot pick the enclosure daily and full clean once or twice a month using a reptile specific disinfectant.

**Please Note – Not all live plants are reptile friendly and not all plants will sustain the weight of an adult tegu.**

## Lighting & Temperature

Provide essential UVB (12%) to create a daytime cycle of 10–12 hours a day. This is best controlled by a timer. They require a basking area with a temperature around 37–40°C – achieve this by using a heat bulb or ceramic heat emitter with a guard controlled by a thermostat at all times. There should be a temperature gradient across the enclosure with a cool end dropping to around 29°C. Night time temperatures can drop but should not fall below 23°C.

## Food & Water

Golden tegus are mainly meat eaters but will also eat some fruit and vegetables. They should be fed a variety of appropriate sized items such as:

- Mice
- Waxworms (treat)
- Egg (scrambled or hard boiled)
- Locusts
- Strawberries
- Grapes
- Kale
- Watercress
- Melons
- Banana (treat)

## Handling

Tegus should not be forcefully handled. They can be very aggressive and are very strong reptiles (especially their jaw). Taming them will take some time and it is best to talk to your tegu as they will learn to recognise your voice. Wear gloves to minimise bite damage and over time they will get used to you. This is not likely to be a quick process.