

Tokay Gecko

Gekko gekko

Reptile

Scientific Name

Gekko gekko

Other Names

None

Range

Native to Southeast Asia, Philippines, Indonesia and western New Guinea

Habitat

Tropical rainforest

Average Size

Length: 11 - 15 in.
Weight: 250 – 350 g.

Description

A large lizard with a blue-gray body covered in reddish-orange spots.

Diet

In the wild: Insects
In captivity: Insects

Lifespan

In the wild: Estimated at 10 years
In captivity: Up to 15 years

Incubation

200 days

Clutch Size

2 eggs

Sexual Maturity

3 years of age

Predators

Snakes and humans

Population Status

Not threatened



Behavior

Tokay Geckos are solitary and nocturnal lizards that only come together during mating season. They are extremely territorial and aggressive and will vigorously defend their territory against intruders with sharp teeth capable of inflicting severe and powerful bites. Tokay Geckos make a variety of sounds including hisses, squeaks, whistles, growls and barks that serve as communication, to finding members of the opposite sex during the breeding season, and as a means of warning or defense.

An important characteristic of the Tokay Gecko is its ability to cast off its tail in defense and regenerate a new one. The tail has several sections where it can break; the part of the tail that has been cast off will continue to move violently for several minutes, giving the gecko time to escape. It takes about three weeks for these geckos to completely regenerate a new tail, but it is rarely as long as the original.

These arboreal lizards move easily through the trees using flattened toe pads that are covered with dead, keratinized scales called lamellae. The lamellae scale surface is made up of long hair-like structures called setae, with each seta being divided and subdivided along its length. Because of these setae, Tokay Geckos are capable of climbing up almost any surface including glass, and are often found clinging to the walls of guest houses and hotels.

Reproduction and Breeding

Breeding season in the wild lasts four to five months during which time females lay two to three eggs each month. The eggs have a soft, sticky shell that hardens soon after the female places them on a wall, rock or piece of bark. While the female may remain in the immediate area to guard the eggs, there is no parental involvement once the geckos hatch.

Conservation

Tokay Geckos are not listed on Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES) or International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and are abundant in most parts of their range.

Due to their continued use in Chinese medicine, however, their populations in South China, Vietnam and Thailand have declined substantially. Because this species has been introduced to several U.S. states, including Hawaii, Florida, and Texas, as well as some islands in the Caribbean, it is now considered an invasive species outside of its natural range.



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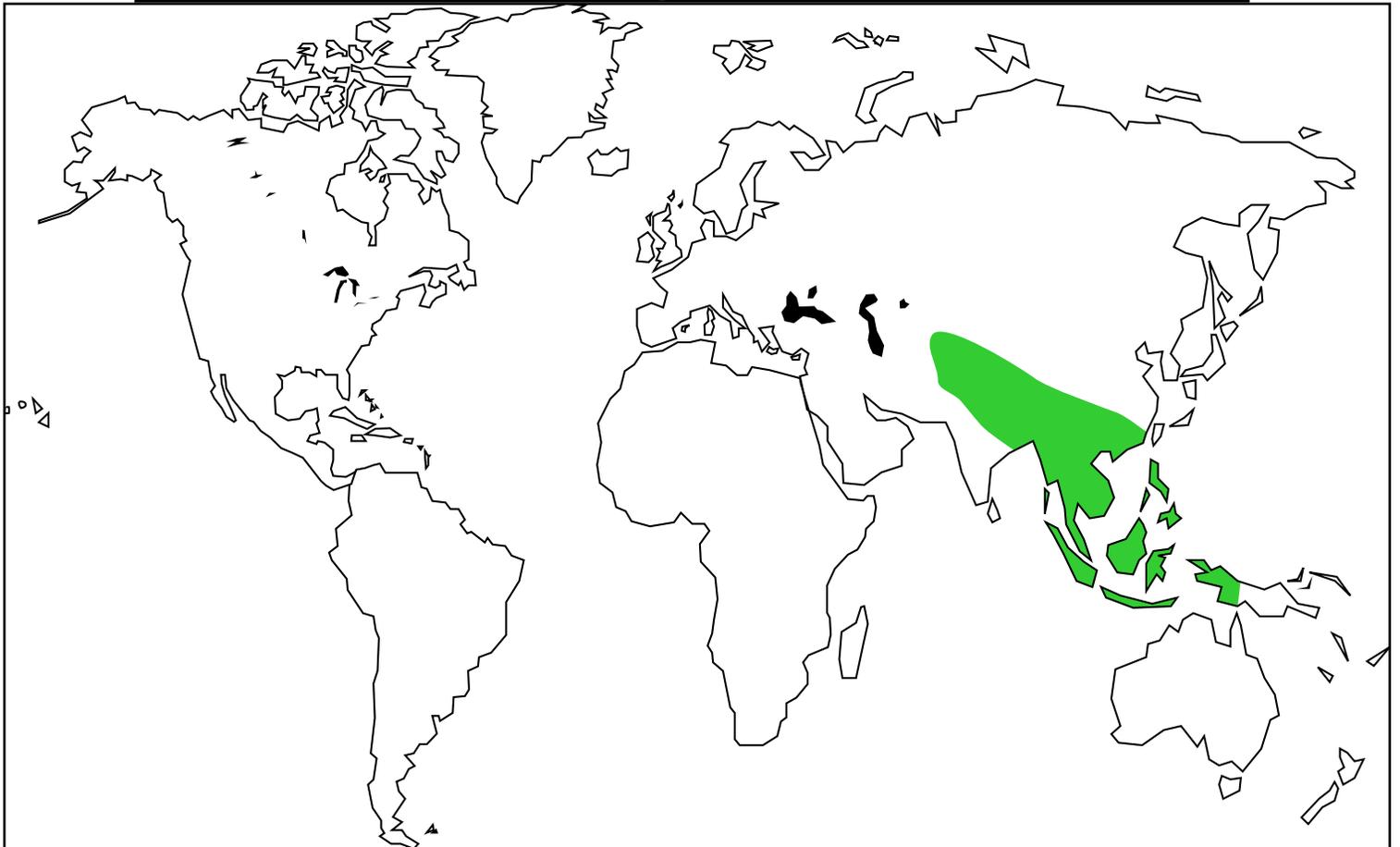
Amazing Facts

This is the second largest species of gecko.

The eyelids of this gecko are fused together and transparent.

Tokay Geckos form mutualistic relationships with humans in tropical areas; humans provide shelter and geckos provide insect extermination.

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