

Volume 19 / Issue 05 • JULY 2019

# Animal Scene

**GETTING  
ADOPTED  
BY A  
STRAY CAT**

**JUGS JUGUETA'S  
SHELL-TERED  
LIFE**

**RAINING  
MORE THAN  
CATS AND DOGS**

**FROG-EYED**

# Gecko

JULY 2019

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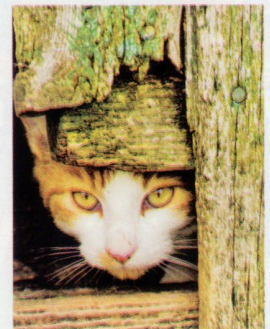
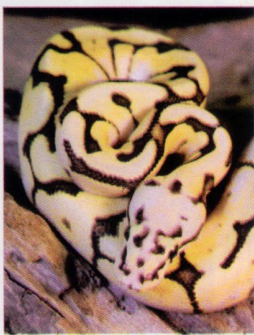
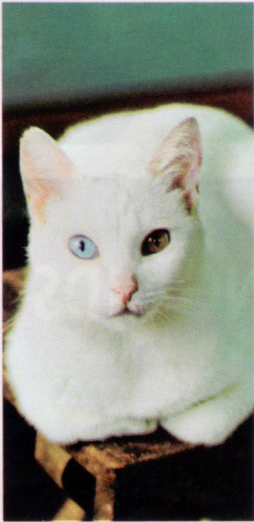
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# Little Wonder

## The frog-eyed gecko

By NATE MARTINEZ  
Photos by JEFFREY C. LIM

**T**he frog-eyed gecko, also known as the *wonder gecko*, is a very cute and unique-looking lizard. If you think you don't like lizards, this lovely littler critter might just change your mind.

What sets them apart from other geckos are the adorable big round eyes reminiscent of what frogs have, hence their name.



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## Cover Story

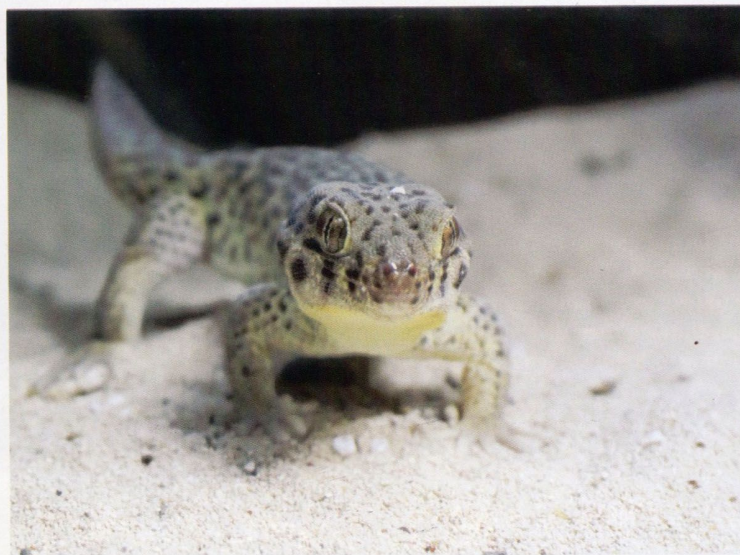


### TAXONOMIC INFORMATION

Kingdom: Animalia  
Phylum: Cordata  
Class: Reptilia  
Order: Squamata  
Family: Sphaerodactylidae  
Genus: Teratoscincus  
Species: T. scincus

### SUBSPECIES

Teratoscincus scincus  
Teratoscincus roborowskii  
Teratoscincus bedriagai  
Teratoscincus keyserlingii  
Teratoscincus microlepis  
Teratoscincus przewalskii



### LIZARD LOVER

Bert, who has been interested in reptiles since he was a child, tells us more about these geckos. He currently cares for two of them, named Tomtom and Yumyum.

He says he has always had a certain fascination for geckos. "Whenever I [saw] eggs inside our old cabinet, I waited [for them] to hatch [into] baby geckos."



### NO PLACE LIKE HOME

"[Just] like [when you] move into a new house or community, [you] really need to adjust. Frog-eyed geckos don't eat for a week [after moving to a new home], hiding in holes provided in there new enclosure," says Bert.

Frog-eyed geckos live in the desert stretching from Southern Asia to Western China, and even some Middle Eastern countries, according to FactsDiet.com. Living in the dessert, they have been able to adapt to extreme climates.

They make 32-inch-deep holes in the humid ground in their natural habitat. They are even able to take oxygen directly from the air through their delicate skin, according to ReptilesWeb.com.

### SOUNDS FISHY

These little critters are covered in scales which are more fish-like rather than reptile-like. Because they live in harsh and dry environments, their unique scales come in handy, helping them absorb moisture and stay mobile when burrowing in the sand. Their scales are also very handy communication tools: They produce a rattling sound used to attract mates, establish territorial behavior, and to scare away predators.

### SMALL WONDER

Frog-eyed geckos have a large and broad head with a short snout. These cute little wonders can grow as big as 4.5 to 6.5 inches (11.4 to 15.9 centimeters).

### NO ORDINARY GECKO

"House geckos have [suction-like] feet so that they can hold onto walls and ceilings, while frog-eyed geckos have nails built to burrow in sand, [keeping them safe from predators] during the hot day," Bert explains.







### TWO-TONE

These geckos are yellowish, sometimes with a trail of dark stripes or spots on their backs, according to Exotic Pets UK. The color of their long and strong limbs ranges from yellow to orange.

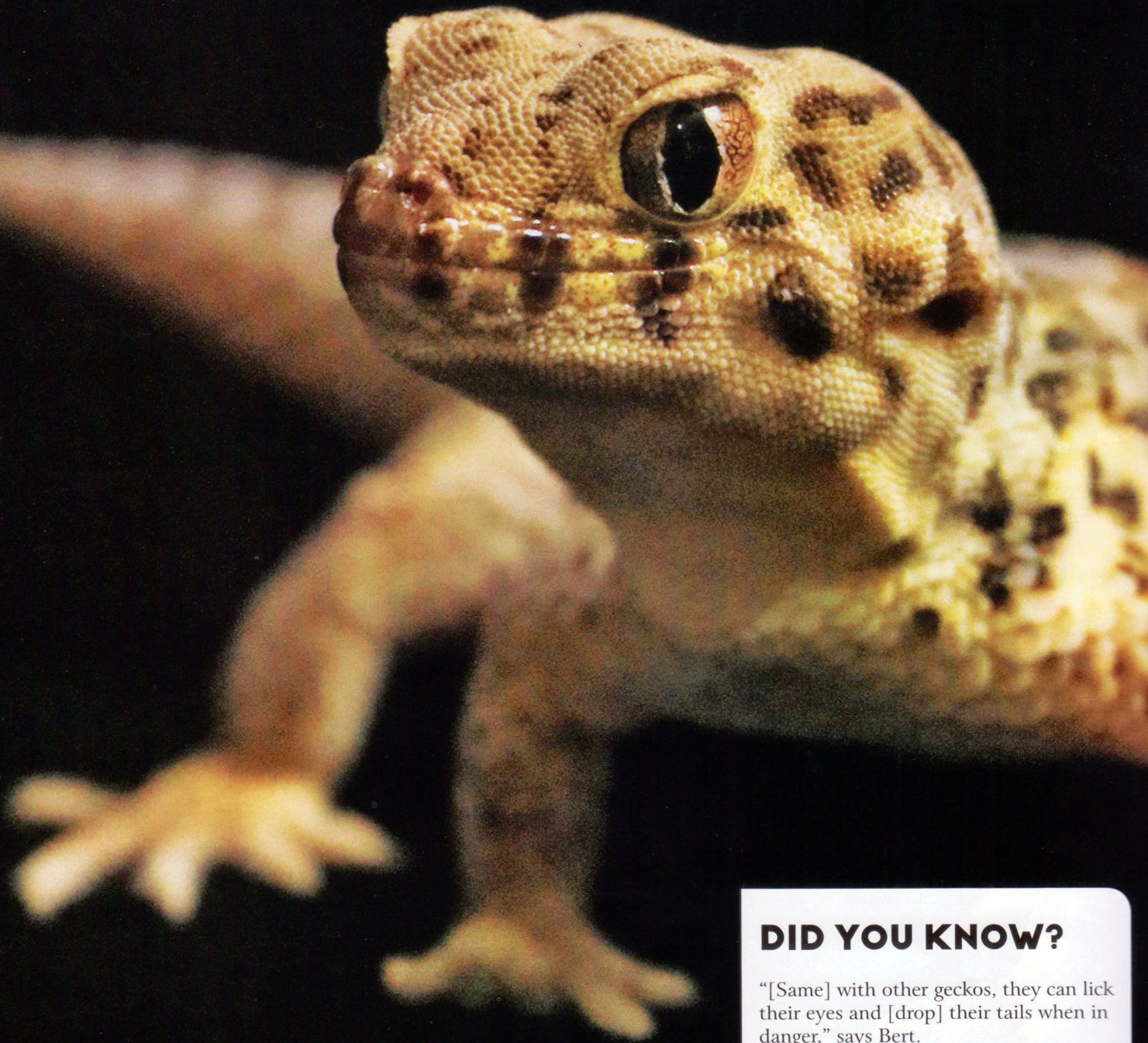
When one looks closer, each scale has two shades of color. Their heads usually have darker, almost-black spots, located a little above the front of their shoulders. The sides of their bodies are mostly pale, while their undersides are usually white.

### BEST LEFT ALONE

“When you [spend time with them] everyday even for just a minute, your relationship will be stronger, same as with dogs and cats,” Bert explains. However, these lizards are naturally very shy and don’t appreciate too much handling. They may shed scales and drop tails just to escape.

Frog-eyed geckos are nocturnal critters, according to ReptilesWeb.com. They are also curious creatures: One may notice that they like to observe from afar. At the end of the day, they have their own personalities, with some being friendlier than the others.





**DID YOU KNOW?**

“[Same] with other geckos, they can lick their eyes and [drop] their tails when in danger,” says Bert.



## HOME SWEET HOME

While glass terrariums are widely used to house frog-eyed geckos, they are better kept inside a wooden vivarium. Northampton Reptile Center says that a wooden vivarium makes the temperature easier to regulate. With glass types, good heating equipment becomes a necessity.

Their homes should at least be 23 inches in length. The housing should be long enough to allow a temperature gradient: warm on one end and cool on the other. Keep in mind that males should not be housed together.

Bert, however, discourages catching wild geckos. "If you happen to see them in the wild, [it's] better not to catch them and keep them. It's hard for them to adapt and adjust in a small house or enclosure."

## LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP

Opening your doors to a frog-eyed gecko requires commitment. "[They can live] 12 to 20 years," says Bert. "You really need devotion in keeping them."

## TOO SMART TO MISS A MEAL

"[When] they know it's feeding time, they come to you excitedly. . . They are insectivores and will eat any insect that can fit in their mouths," says Bert.

"I feed them everyday or I just put food in [their] bowls."

These little wonders also need vitamins and minerals, including calcium supplements.

## WARM UP

Northampton Reptile Center explains that in the day, frog-eyed geckos should be exposed to low levels of UV rays and temperatures ranging from 85 to 90oF. This could be achieved by using a 40-watt basking bulb.

They still need to be kept warm at night with a temperature of 80oF. This may be a challenge, since frog-eyed geckos need complete darkness at night. Heating mats would be a better option to keep them warm at night.

"They need to be always dry," adds Bert. They should be kept in a dry substrate to keep the humidity low. However, choosing the right kind of substrate can be a bit tricky. Their substrates should not be too loose for the geckos not to swallow them. Using just about any special sand bought from a pet store won't do, especially if it has calcium in it.

## SAFE SPACE

Frog-eyed geckos also need places to hide in. Provide decor that provide nooks and crannies where they can stay. Northampton Reptile Center also explains that artificial plants, desert plants, and trailing plants are good options as they give a more natural look while providing cover.