

Feeders, Gutloading, Schedule, Supplements

Feeders, Gutloading:

Here i'll list some of the feeders and how you can gutload them. Those obviously aren't all possibilities existing.

Gutloading is the process of basically feeding the feeders to make them more nutritious for the leo.

But even if you properly gutload the feeders you still want to feed a variety to keep your leo healthy.

Great feeders:

Desert locust (Schistocerca gregaria): Locusts often don't live too long and don't survive any mistakes made. Especially pesticides in Fruits and vegetables kill them fast. You want to have rather dry and wet food available all the time because locusts regulate the water amount by eating dry/wet food.

Good food is: Herbs, Leaves of a blackberry bush (maybe even a stick with leaves), carrot greens, oats, wheat germ.

You should never give them too wet food like cucumber, tomato, lettuce or potatoes.

Also you only want stuff without pesticides and want food available 24/7.

Migratory locust (Locusta migratoria): see above

Dubia cockroach (Blattella dubia): Roaches need protein to prevent cannibalism and also need dry and wet food available. Again you don't want anything with pesticides. Keep in mind the Leo will also eat it when it eats the roach. For fruits and vegetables roaches eat nearly everything except onions and citrus fruit. From my experience raw potato and apples are loved.

Red runner roaches (Blattella lateralis): see above

Good feeders:

Field cricket (Gryllus assimilis): for dry food and protein again dog/cat food (dry) works good. For wet food you can use apples, carrot, pumpkin, zucchini, dandelion leaves. Cucumber can work too but often is too wet which can cause diarrhea and death.

And again: no pesticides!

African/Mediterranean field cricket/ two-spotted cricket (Gryllus bimaculatus): see above

Tropical House-cricket (*Gryllodes sigillatus*): see above

House cricket (*Acheta domesticus*): see above

Silkworms (*Bombyx mori*): Silkworms basically only eat mulberry leaves. So if you don't have access to that just feed the silkworms fast.

Black soldier fly larvae/calcium worms (*Hermetia illucens*):

Zophoba/Morio worms (*Zophobas morio*): carrots, potatoeskins, oats, wheat bran

Okay feeders:

Buffalo worms (*Alphitobius diaperinus*): apples, carrots, soaks white bread and fishfood for proteins. Be careful as these can eat styrofoam backdrops. I'd recommend watching the leo eat them so none get lost in the enclosure

Mealworms (*Tenebrio molitor*): wheat bran, apples, pears, carrots, zucchini, pumpkin, oats, hard bread

Waxworm (*Galleria mellonella*): Be careful! Not only are these addicting for the leo but also they can eat through plastic and escape fast! And once they are out they will try to eat anything they find. You want metal or glass containers with a screw cap!

Also PLEASE make sure no waxworms escape. They are a huge issue for beekeepers!

For food the best would be a mix of:

6 parts flour

2 parts skimmed milk powder

2 parts wheat bran

1 part dry yeast

5.5 parts glycerin

5.5 parts honey

You can freeze it and thaw the portions you need. You want to heat it to 35 degrees Celsius to melt the crystallized honey.

The Glycerin helps the worm produce fat. They do produce it on their own but it's faster if you feed it. The yeast makes it tastier so they'll rather eat it.

Alternative recipe is 5 parts honey, 5 parts glycerin, 2 parts dry yeast, 2 parts skimmed milk powder and 5-12 parts wheat bran.

Schedule: For the schedule and amount of feeders everyone does abit different. Some use tha age other the weight of the leo.

If you want to use the age:

0-4 months: daily

4-6 months: every other day

6-12 months: 2 times a week

With adult leos you`ll find your own schedule that suits you. In general feed 1-3 times a week.

By weight:

<15g and gravid females: daily (a pause if they don´t want to eat one day is okay

15-30g every other day but keep an eye one the size of the tail

>30g 1-3 times a week (every 2-4 days)

The amount of feeders depends on the leo and the size of the tail. If the tail is too small you can feed more items. If it stays at the same (good) size just continue how you do it now and if it´s too big you need to reduce it a bit.

The number also depends on the feeder and the size of the feeder. Like 8 Roaches are a lot more than 8 crickets. But you can roughly say 2-8 items/feeding.

But as i mentioned before this is quite individual so it´s a bit of try and error till you find the perfect amount for your leo. Some also go by time and offer as many as the leo will eat in 10 minutes.

Supplements:

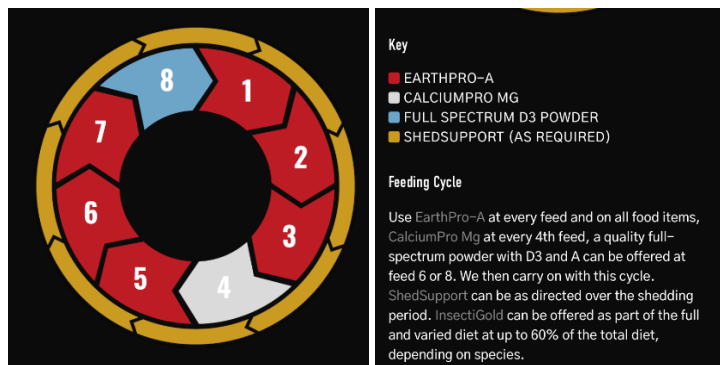
You have to provide plain calcium in the tank all the time so the leos can access that whenever they want. But calcium alone is not enough. Leos also need minerals and vitamins to stay healthy.

One of the most important vitamins is D3. The body producess it on it´s own if UV-B is available. The natural D3 obviously is superior to artificail D3. Also then you can be sure that the leo gets the amount needed and not too much/ not enough.

However if you don´t provide UVB (yet ☺) you want to supplement with artificial D3 to prevent metabolic bone disease (MBD)

For the Schedule it again depends on the brand/supplement

Below is an example of the schedule arcadia recommends for insectivores.



<https://www.arcadiareptile.com/earthpro/feeding-programme/insectivore/>

Other sources say to dust with vitamins once a week or every other feeding. Best is to have a look at what the brand recommends.

For dusting the easiest method is to put feeders and the powder in a container and slightly shake it till all feeders are dusted.

What's also very important for vitamins is gutloading of the feeders. So make sure to keep your feeders healthy so your leos also stay healthy.

Some commonly used supplements in US/UK are the arcadia supplements (CalciumPro Mg/ Earth Pro A) or Reapshy products. Also ZooMed is good to use.

Most vitamins/calcium that is suitable for reptiles is also suitable for leos.

For the calcium you can also use calciumcitrate($\text{Ca}_3(\text{C}_6\text{H}_5\text{O}_7)_2$). Based on experience many leos don't like sepia/cuttlebone as a calcium source though.

Main Sources used:

„Leopardgecko“ by Karsten Griebshammer and Gunther Kohler

<https://www.der-leopardgecko.de/>