

Mediterranean gecko *Hemidactylus turcicus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Reptilia

Order: Squamata

Family: Gekkonidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, nonnative

FEATURES

Also known as the Turkish gecko or moon lizard, the Mediterranean gecko is about 4-5 inches in total body length. Its eyes are large, lidless and have a vertical, elliptical pupil. The body color is very light tan, light gray or white with dark and light spots. The large, sticky toe pads extend nearly the entire length of the toes. Small bumps cover the head, body, legs and tail.

BEHAVIORS

This species has been introduced by humans, intentionally and unintentionally, to many areas. It is nearly always associated with human habitats. When present, it often lives in human homes, much as mice do, hiding in cracks and crevices. A nocturnal species, the Mediterranean gecko may be seen on buildings, window screens or near lights searching for insects and other small invertebrates. It can make squeaking noises. Females lay a clutch of two eggs and may do so several times per year. This species is known to sometimes use communal nesting with several females laying their eggs together under bark, in crevices or in moist soil. The Mediterranean gecko is spreading its range northward from the southern United States and has been noted in several locations in southern Illinois.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

Edge

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