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FASCINATING FACTS ABOUT GECKOS—TAILS TO TOEPADS

A new exhibit of live geckos, May 30 – Sept. 7, 2009

PHILADELPHIA—There are more than 1,250 species of geckos worldwide, and scientists continue to discover new ones every year. “Geckos—Tails to Toepads,” a new exhibit at The Academy of Natural Sciences from May 30 to Sept. 7, showcases the remarkable array of species and little-known facts about these amazing lizards. Here are a few facts that visitors will learn:

- Most geckos can’t blink. Like snakes, they have a transparent scale covering the eye, but no moveable eyelids.
- No geckos are truly dangerous to humans, although a few can deliver a painful bite.
- Gecko toes stick without suction cups, hooks or glue. They can even stick under water, and their toe pads are self-cleaning.
- Don’t grab a gecko by the tail. Most species have built-in weak spots that allow the tail to break off when needed. The broken tail often wriggles to distract an enemy.
- Most geckos are active at night. Unlike other lizards, they communicate with squawks, chirps, trills or barks. In some tropical countries, the noise keeps people awake at night!
- Some gecko populations are entirely female. They reproduce asexually by parthenogenesis.
- Most geckos eat insects, but some species eat nectar and fruit. A few larger species eat small mice, birds and other geckos.

“Geckos—Tails to Toepads” was created by *Peeling Productions* at Clyde Peeling's REPTILAND in Allenwood, Pa. The exhibit is **free** with museum admission.

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The Academy is located at 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway and is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and weekends until 5 p.m. Admission is \$12 for adults, \$10 for children ages 3-12, seniors, college students and military personnel, and free for Members and children under 3. There is a \$2 fee for “Butterflies!”