CARE GUIDE

MINIBEAST WILDLIFE

RAINFOREST SCORPION

Hormurus sp.

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PROFILE

Rainforest Scorpions are found in the northern tropical regions of Australia, and live within crevices in rocks where their flattened bodies allow them to hide safely from predators. They hunt at night by ambushing small animals (usually insects) that pass within reach.

Like other scorpions this species is venomous, however their venom is only mild and they are not considered dangerous to humans. Prey is captured and often killed using their powerful pincers (pedipalps), with the sting only being used for large or vigorous prey.
Scorpions grow by shedding their outer skeleton (exoskeleton). This process is called ecdysis or moulting. They usually do this out of sight in a safe place, and will often moult at night. During the moulting process they are very vulnerable to attack from other animals and cannot defend themselves.

One incredible part of the life cycle of this species is the mating ritual. Male and female scorpions will lock pincers and perform a dance known as the 'promenade à deux'. During this ritual the male deposits a sperm capsule on the ground called a spermatophore. He guides the female over it until she collects it within her reproductive opening. Many scorpions have very long gestation periods, and for this species it is 9-12 months. This species can have up to 20 babies which are born live. They move on to their mother's back shortly after birth, and remain there for several weeks before dispersing to begin independent predatory lives.

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FOOD

Live or freshly dead insects once or twice weekly. Crickets and cockroaches are ideal. Insects about ¼ the body size of the scorpion are recommended. Dead insects may be fed to the scorpion via forceps or tweezers, but they will also pick up freshly dead insects off the ground. Remove any uneaten food or leftovers after 24 hours.

WATER

Rainforest scorpions rarely drink and don't need water at all as long as they have a suitable moist substrate, but you can add a dish (or bottle lid) with a moist cotton wool ball or sponge to be safe.

ENCLOSURE

A plastic or glass terrarium is an ideal enclosure for your scorpion, with a minimum size of 20cmH x 20cmW x 15cmD. Place coco-peat or similar substrate in the bottom of the enclosure to a depth of around 3cm, and keep the substrate moist throughout. Place a flat rock or bark in the enclosure as a shelter for your scorpion.

SUBSTRATE

Moist coco-peat (coir-peat) is an ideal substrate, with a minimum depth of 30mm. It should be moist enough that it clumps together and holds its shape if squeezed in a fist, but doesn't dribble water. As these scorpions like to shelter in narrow crevices and burrows, a light-weight flat rock or piece of bark upon the substrate with a narrow space beneath is a great way to provide this.

TEMPERATURE

This species will do best at 22 – 28° C. (Overnight or brief periodic cooling to between 10-20°C during winter is not harmful as long as daytime temperatures reach around 20°C).

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

Remove any uneaten food or food waste that appears. If any mould or fungi starts to grow in the enclosure, remove as needed. A complete substrate change may be required if the enclosure is overgrown with fungi. Otherwise, a substrate change is only necessary once a year at most.

HANDLING

Although these scorpions are not aggressive, handling is not recommended as they are mildly venomous.

COMMON ISSUES

This species can be cannibalistic at times, so they should be kept individually to avoid issues. Pairing for breeding should be done under close supervision. These scorpions are good climbers and will cling to anything that has a rough surface, but will not climb smooth surfaces such as glass. Live food insects can interrupt the scorpion moulting, so remove insects if they aren't eaten.

5-10 years life span

These animals are captive bred, and should not be released into the wild

To prevent dehydration, these scorpions require relatively high humidity (60-90%). This can be maintained by keeping the substrate moist.

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