



CARE GUIDE



TIGER HUNTSMAN

Undescribed species



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GREEN-BELLIED HUNTSMAN

Typostola barbata



PROFILE

The Tiger Huntsman is a spectacular species, and would have to rate as one of the most strikingly coloured spiders in Australia. Incredibly, this species was discovered relatively recently (in 2006) by Alan & Deanna Henderson, and Jessie Sinclair whilst on a collection trip for Melbourne Museum. It is still awaiting scientific description, as currently no taxonomic work is being done on the Sparassidae (huntsmen) family in Australia. They are relatively large spiders, growing up to a body length of around 45 mm, and a leg span of approximately 160 mm. It is an obligate rainforest species from Far North Queensland, and has since been recorded from Cape Tribulation to Innisfail.

Tiger Huntsmen live within the foliage of the rainforest and are seldom seen. Their retreat is comprised of leaves bound together by silk, in which the spider resides. They are well adapted for life within the foliage and actively jump from leaf to leaf. They will also leap away when threatened into the forest below.

Like other huntsmen, this species lays its eggs encased within a flattened white silk egg sac. The young emerge approximately 30 days after being laid, and over two hundred spiderlings may emerge from a single egg sac. After they emerge, the spiderlings will cluster around their mother for a week or two inside the retreat. Once they disperse any chance meetings of the siblings will often result in one eating the other.

These spiders grow by shedding their outer skeleton (exoskeleton). This process is called ecdysis or moulting. To moult successfully they need to hang uninterrupted beneath a leaf or branch. Their colour darkens slightly and they stop feeding a few days before moulting. Males and females can be identified easily after they mature; males have enlarged bulbs on the ends of their pedipalps (feelers) and are hairy grey/brown with a pink tinge, females are more robust and vividly coloured.

FOOD

Live insects. Crickets, cockroaches, moths and flies are ideal. The food insects should be no larger than 1/3 of the size of your spider. Feeding twice a week is recommended, but young spiders will feed more often when they are growing. Remove live insects from your enclosure if your spider has not eaten them within 2 hours.

WATER

Mist spray lightly around your spider every second day – it will drink the droplets.

ENCLOSURE

The enclosure needs to be large enough to allow your spider to shed its exoskeleton properly. An ideal enclosure should be higher than it is wide, as these spiders like to climb upwards. A minimum height of 30cm is recommended. Minibeast Wildlife's pop-up mesh or tall acrylic enclosures are suitable. Artificial rainforest foliage is a suitable alternative to real plants and the spiders will use them to create retreats. Items like bark hides can also be used. Ensure the enclosure is not placed in direct sunlight as this may cause it to overheat. Make sure there is plenty of ventilation in your enclosure; fly wire mesh is ideal, but ensure there are no gaps which allow the spider to get out.

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

Remove any food waste that has fallen to the bottom of the enclosure.

SUBSTRATE

Not essential, but you can use leaf litter or coco-peat to help soak up any excess moisture and to provide humidity.

HANDLING

Direct handling is not recommended. Although these spiders are not dangerously venomous and are quite timid, they are rapid movers and can jump away and easily escape.

TEMPERATURE

This species will thrive at 24 – 26 degrees C, but will tolerate 12 – 24 degrees and have a slower growth rate.

COMMON ISSUES

Due to their flattened bodies and fast speed, these spiders are excellent escape artists! They will also jump and run rapidly. Ensure there are no gaps around the lid or doors of your enclosure, and take care not to allow your spider to run out when opening it.



1 - 3 years life span



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



60-80%

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