herpy

AGAMAS

North-African Mastigure

Uromastyx acanthinura

Uromastyx acanthinura is a robust spiny-tailed lizard from the stony and gravelly parts of the northern Sahara. It grows to 30-43 cm and weighs about 450 g, digs deep burrows and feeds mostly on plants. It needs a large, hot and dry enclosure with a deep substrate and powerful UVB, and it can live for more than 20 years. The species is territorial and is kept alone.

Family: Agamidae Published 16 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**30-43 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**15-24 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Rock-dwelling, terrestrial and burrowing**
Habitat	**Desert, semi-desert and rocky terrain**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**120 × 60 × 60 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**27-32 °C**
Basking spot	**50-55 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-22 °C**
Humidity	**20-30%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Winter rest	**16-22 °C** 8-12 weeks
Diet	**Plants**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**48 months**
Clutch size	**6-23 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1**
Incubation	**56-84 days** at 33-34 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Near Threatened (NT)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	An adult needs an enclosure of at least 120 × 60 × 60 cm (length × width × height), and bigger is better, for example 150 × 60 × 60 cm for a large animal. Ordinary glass terrariums are too small.
TEMPERATURE	The basking spot must have a surface temperature of 50-55 °C, measured with an infrared thermometer directly under the lamp. The cool side must be 27-32 °C.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity in the enclosure must be low: about 20-30 %, measured at the floor on the cool side. Persistently high humidity makes the animal ill, so do not mist the enclosure.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is diurnal and requires strong light. Use an LED lamp or a fluorescent tube of about 6500 K as daylight in addition to the heat lamp.
FEEDING	Adults are almost pure herbivores.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The species is markedly territorial: both sexes defend their territory, and in fights the animals bite each other on the sides, so that white scars can develop. Even littermates attack each other if they are kept together too long.
NATIVE RANGE	Algeria, Tunisia and Libya.