herpy

AGAMAS

Southern Tree Agama

Acanthocercus atricollis

Acanthocercus atricollis is a sturdy, tree-dwelling agama from the savannahs and dry woodland of southern and eastern Africa. Males develop a blue head in the breeding season, and the animals sit on branches and trunks waiting for prey. Little is known about its care: the species needs a tall enclosure with sturdy branches, a very hot basking spot, UVB and only one male per enclosure.

Family: Agamidae Former name: *Agama atricollis; Stellio atricollis; Laudakia atricollis*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**25-35 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**10-15 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Savanna and dry forest**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**120 × 60 × 100 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-32 °C**
Basking spot	**38-43 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-21 °C**
Humidity	**30-50%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**11 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1**
Incubation	**56-90 days** at 26-29 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Not listed**
EU annex	**Not listed**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Little is known about the care of *Acanthocercus atricollis*. The recommendations are based on the habitat and the animal's size.
TEMPERATURE	By day the temperature in the enclosure should be 24-32 °C, and the basking spot high up should have a surface temperature of 38-43 °C, measured with an infrared thermometer.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity should be 30-50 %. This suits the savannah and dry woodland where the species lives. The enclosure must have good ventilation, so that it dries out between mistings.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is active by day and needs strong light and UVB corresponding to Ferguson zone 3: a T5 HO tube of 10-12 % in a reflective fitting over the basking spot, so that UVB covers the warm half of the enclosure.
FEEDING	*Acanthocercus atricollis* lives on arthropods. In the wild its food consists mostly of ants, beetles and locusts. Ants make up by far the most prey items, but it is locusts and beetles that make up the most bulk.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Acanthocercus atricollis* is a calm and watchful species that spends most of the day sitting still on a branch watching its surroundings.
NATIVE RANGE	South Africa, Eswatini, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique and Kenya.