herpy

AGAMAS

Ornate Mastigure

Uromastyx ornata

Uromastyx ornata is a small and unusually colourful spiny-tailed lizard from the rocky deserts on both sides of the Red Sea. The male is green, blue and sometimes red with yellow spots on the back. It reaches 30-36 cm, is almost purely herbivorous and digs into a deep substrate. It needs a large, hot, dry enclosure with strong UVB and lives for many years, but it is not a cuddly lizard.

Family: Agamidae Former name: *Uromastyx philbyi*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**30-36 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**15-25 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Rock-dwelling, terrestrial and burrowing**
Habitat	**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 or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**4-20 eggs**
Incubation	**60-70 days** at 33-34 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

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. That is larger than ordinary glass terrariums offer, so choose an enclosure made of wood, PVC or plastic with a glass front.

TEMPERATURE

The basking spot should have a surface temperature of 50-55 °C, measured with an infrared thermometer directly under the lamp. The cool side sits at 27-32 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Humidity must be low, about 20-30 %, measured at the substrate 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 needs strong light. Use an LED lamp or a fluorescent tube of about 6500 K as daylight, separate from the heat; the animals are more active and eat better with it.

FEEDING

Uromastyx ornata is herbivorous. About 90 % of the diet should be leafy greens and flowers, about 5 % hard vegetables and about 5 % dry food.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Adults are calm and sedentary, but territorial towards other adults, especially males towards males. Keep them singly.

NATIVE RANGE

Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.