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MONITOR LIZARDS

Line-tailed Pygmy Monitor

Varanus caudolineatus

Varanus caudolineatus is one of the smallest monitors in the world: a diurnal, semi-arboreal pygmy monitor of 25-32 cm from the dry scrubland of Western Australia. It lives in crevices under loose bark and in hollow trees, feeds on insects and small lizards and is rare in captivity. The species has been bred in captivity, but husbandry knowledge is sparse, and part of the guidance is based on related pygmy monitors.

Family: Varanidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**25-32 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**8-12 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Semi-desert**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**80 × 50 × 100 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**28-34 °C**
Basking spot	**45-55 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-24 °C**
Humidity	**30-60%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**3-6 eggs**
Clutches per year	**2-4**
Incubation	**77 days** at 29-31 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	One animal or a pair needs an enclosure of at least 80 × 50 × 100 cm (length × width × height), and height is more important than floor area, because the species lives on trunks and under bark. Larger is better.
TEMPERATURE	*Varanus caudolineatus* is active when the air is 30-45 °C, so the enclosure must allow high temperatures. Background by day: 28-34 °C.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	*Varanus caudolineatus* comes from dry regions in Western Australia, and the humidity in the enclosure should be about 30-60 %, with a moister corner at the bottom of the substrate and drier air at the basking spot.
LIGHTING AND UVB	*Varanus caudolineatus* is diurnal and basks in the heat, so it does best with strong light and UVB.
FEEDING	In the wild *Varanus caudolineatus* lives mostly on arthropods: cockroaches, grasshoppers and other insects, spiders and scorpions, and more rarely centipedes, beetles, cicadas and moths.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Varanus caudolineatus* is so small that bites and claws are unlikely to cause serious injury, but the animal can both bite and scratch, so handling should be calm and brief. Tail whipping is hardly a problem at this size.
NATIVE RANGE	Australia.