herpy

MONITOR LIZARDS

Bluetail monitor

Varanus doreanus

Varanus doreanus is a large, powerful rainforest monitor from New Guinea and the northernmost part of Australia, with a grey-blue body and a pale blue tail with black bands. Experience with its care and breeding is very limited, and several of the figures are borrowed from close relatives.

Family: Varanidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**100-135 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**10-15 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Rainforest**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**300 × 150 × 150 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**26-33 °C**
Basking spot	**40-45 °C**
Temperature, night	**24-26 °C**
Humidity	**60-80%**
Water	**Water section**
Water temperature	**26-28 °C**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects and vertebrates**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**4-9 eggs**
Incubation	**164-166 days** at 29 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

Varanus doreanus needs a large enclosure with a water pool in which it can swim and dive.

TEMPERATURE

By day the enclosure for *Varanus doreanus* should be 26-33 °C, with a basking spot of 40-45 °C. This is the surface temperature at the basking spot measured with an IR thermometer, not the air temperature.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

The species lives in rainforest with about 1,700 mm of rain a year on Cape York and more in parts of New Guinea. Keep the humidity at 60-80 %. Spray the enclosure daily, and keep the floor damp, but not wet.

LIGHTING AND UVB

The species is diurnal and uses basking spots, so UVB is recommended, and Ferguson zone 3 is suitable.

FEEDING

In the wild *Varanus doreanus* eats reptiles, eggs (especially turtle eggs) and insects such as beetles, and probably also nestling birds. In the enclosure large insects, mice, fish and crabs are suitable.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Adults are powerful and fast and can cause serious injuries. A bite from a monitor of a metre or more can go deep, the claws are sharp and can tear the skin, and the tail is used as a whip.

NATIVE RANGE

Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Australia.