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MONITOR LIZARDS

Blue Tree Monitor

Varanus macraei

Varanus macraei is a slender tree monitor with a prehensile tail and a pattern of blue eye-spots on a black background. It lives only on the island of Batanta in Indonesia, is threatened in the wild, and needs a tall, warm and humid enclosure, live insects and an experienced keeper.

Family: Varanidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**80-110 cm** total length incl. tail
Weight	**150-530 g**
Lifespan	**8-12 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Rainforest**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**120 × 80 × 150 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**29-32 °C**
Basking spot	**38-40 °C**
Temperature, night	**22-25 °C**
Humidity	**70-90%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Insects, vertebrates and worms/snails**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**24-26 months**
Clutch size	**2-7 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-4**
Incubation	**150-240 days** at 28.5-31 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Endangered (EN)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	*Varanus macraei* is a tree monitor, and the enclosure must therefore above all be tall. For one adult the minimum is 120 × 80 × 150 cm (length × width × height), and more is better. A pair needs at least 100 × 100 × 150 cm.
TEMPERATURE	The daytime temperature in the enclosure is kept at 29-32 °C.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity is kept at 70-90 % with daily misting, preferably morning and afternoon.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is diurnal and needs strong light and UVB all day. Use, for example, two fluorescent tubes (about 54 W) and two 100 W heat lamps that also give UV light, or a UVB tube combined with a UV heat lamp.
FEEDING	*Varanus macraei* eats live insects: grasshoppers, crickets, cockroaches (e.g. *Blaptica dubia*), mealworms and superworms, and occasionally earthworms.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The species is diurnal, shy and nervous. New animals hide or flee when touched and can crash into the panes. Females are more timid than males. The animal should not be forced to be handled.
NATIVE RANGE	Indonesia.