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MONITOR LIZARDS

Emerald Monitor

Varanus prasinus

Varanus prasinus is a slender, emerald-green, tree-dwelling monitor from the rainforest of New Guinea, with a prehensile tail and black chevrons across the back. It is beautiful but demanding: it dries out easily, needs both high heat and high humidity, and mortality is highest in the first years in captivity.

Family: Varanidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**60-90 cm** total length incl. tail
Weight	**110-450 g**
Lifespan	**10-15 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
Habitat	**Rainforest**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**120 × 70 × 150 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**26-30 °C**
Basking spot	**40-54 °C**
Temperature, night	**22-24 °C**
Humidity	**60-80%**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Insects**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**2-3 eggs**
Incubation	**168-170 days** at 30 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	A pair or a single adult needs an enclosure of at least 120 × 70 × 150 cm (length × width × height), and larger is better. Height is more important than floor area, because the species uses the vertical space.
TEMPERATURE	*Varanus prasinus* needs a large temperature gradient. The air in the terrarium is kept at 26-30 °C by day, cooler below and warmer close to the basking spot. The basking spot under a halogen lamp should be 40-54 °C.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	*Varanus prasinus* is sensitive to drought, and high humidity is one of the most important factors.
LIGHTING AND UVB	*Varanus prasinus* is diurnal and needs strong light.
FEEDING	In the wild *Varanus prasinus* lives mainly on insects and other invertebrates.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Varanus prasinus* is fast and jumpy and has strong, sharp claws that can tear the skin when the animal clings to hand and arm.
NATIVE RANGE	Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and Australia.