herpy

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 Published 15 November 2026

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 enclosure is kept at 26-30 °C by day, and measured at different places in the enclosure it can range from about 23 to 37 °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.

The full guide with map and updates: herpy.org/varaner/varanus-prasinus