herpy

MONITOR LIZARDS

## Lace Monitor

# *Varanus varius*

*Varanus varius* is a powerful, diurnal climbing monitor from eastern Australia. It grows to about 2 m including the tail, is the closest living relative of *V. komodoensis* and as an adult needs a whole room or a large outdoor enclosure. It is not an animal for beginners, and only little detailed care information exists.

Family: Varanidae  Published 16 November 2026

KEY FACTS

### THE ANIMAL

| | |
|---|---|
| Adult size | **100-200 cm**<br>total length incl. tail |
| Weight | **3,000-14,000 g** |
| Lifespan | **10-15 years** |
| Active | **By day** |
| Lifestyle | **Arboreal and terrestrial** |
| Habitat | **Savanna and temperate woodland and meadow** |
| Difficulty | **Expert** |

### CARE

| | |
|---|---|
| Min. enclosure | **400 × 200 × 200 cm**<br>L × W × H for 1 adult |
| Temperature, day | **28-35 °C** |
| Basking spot | **45-60 °C** |
| Temperature, night | **18-24 °C** |
| Humidity | **40-70%** |
| Water | **Water dish** |
| UVB | **Essential**<br>Ferguson zone 3 |
| Diet | **Insects and vertebrates** |
| Kept | **Singly** |

### BREEDING

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|---|---|
| Reproduction | **Egg-laying** |
| Sexually mature | **24-60 months** |
| Clutch size | **4-14 eggs** |
| Incubation | **180-270 days**<br>at 29-30 °C |

### PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

## Care at a glance

**THE ENCLOSURE**

In New South Wales, where the species is native, the rules for private keepers require at least 5.12 m² of floor or back wall area for one adult, for example 320 × 160 cm.

**TEMPERATURE**

*Varanus varius* is diurnal and basks a lot. The basking spot must be a large, warm surface where the surface reaches 45-60 °C. This is a surface temperature measured with an IR thermometer, not air temperature.

**HUMIDITY AND WATER**

The species does not require high humidity, and 40-70 % is a reasonable starting point (an estimate, not documented for captivity). The enclosure must have both dry areas and a more humid corner so that shedding goes easily.

**LIGHTING AND UVB**

As a diurnal species that basks a lot, *Varanus varius* needs strong light and UVB.

**FEEDING**

In the wild the species eats mainly mammals and carrion and also insects, reptiles, birds and eggs. Detailed feeding plans for captivity are not documented for the species, so the main rule is borrowed from other large monitors.

**BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING**

Safety: *Varanus varius* is strong and fast and can bite, scratch and lash with its tail. The teeth are long and sharp, and a bite can cause deep wounds that bleed heavily, swell and hurt for hours.

**NATIVE RANGE**

Australia.

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