



Ackie Monitor Lizard Care Sheet

Species Name:

Varanus acanthurus

Adult Size:

60cm+

Lifespan:

15-20 years

Breeding Age:

6-18 months



Ackie monitors, scientifically known as *Varanus acanthurus*, are captivating reptiles native to northern Australia. Characterized by their vibrant colours and inquisitive nature, these monitor lizards are popular among reptile enthusiasts. Their compact size, reaching up to 24 inches in length, makes them suitable for captive habitats. Ackies thrive in arid environments and possess keen hunting skills, primarily preying on insects, small mammals, and even other reptiles. They exhibit complex behaviours, including digging burrows for shelter and basking in the sun. Due to their intelligence and relatively manageable care requirements, ackie monitors have gained popularity as pets among reptile enthusiasts worldwide.

Housing:

Enclosure: Provide a spacious enclosure, ideally a wooden 4ft enclosure for a juvenile. As your reptile grows it is likely to need an enclosure in the realms of 5-6ft.

Substrate: Dry substrates such as sand can be used to mimic their natural environment, always use reptile safe sand, ingestion of sand can cause impaction, most reptile sands are designed to be digestible in small amounts.

Alternatively, a soil sand mix can be used to retain moisture to simulate the humid mornings in Australia.

Temperature:

Maintain a basking spot temperature of 35-40°C.

Provide a gradient, with the cooler side around 25-35°C.

Use a heat source like a basking light and a heat mat for heating.

Night time temperatures can drop to 23°C.

Lighting:

Provide a UVB light source (12%) for at least 10-12 hours a day to support calcium metabolism and overall health.

Diet:

Feeding: Offer a varied diet of insects (crickets, roaches, mealworms). Ackie monitors can also eat rodents when they reach a reasonable size.

Supplements: Dust insects with calcium and vitamin supplements 2-3 times a week.



Humidity and Hydration:

A humidity of 30-50% should be maintained.

Provide a dish for drinking and bathing. Mist enclosure occasionally to maintain humidity.

Enrichment and Handling:

Place hiding spots, rocks, and branches for climbing to create a stimulating environment.

Provide a secure hide for them to retreat and feel safe.

Handle and interact with your monitor gently and regularly to foster trust, but be mindful of their stress levels.

Health Considerations:

Regularly monitor for signs of illness, such as lethargy, changes in appetite, or difficulty shedding.

Quarantine new reptiles before introducing them to existing enclosures.

Remember that the care requirements for Ackie Monitors may vary slightly based on individual needs, so observe your reptile's behaviour and make adjustments accordingly. Always prioritize the well-being and health of your pet by providing a well-maintained and enriched environment.