

# Prehistoric Pets Care Sheet

## Argus Monitors (*Varanus panoptes horni*)

### General Information

Argus monitors are powerful lizards that inhabit the grasslands of southern New Guinea. Argus monitors are large lizards typically growing 4-5 feet. These lizards are very active and typically chase down their prey. One typical characteristic of Argus monitors is their ability to stand upright. In our opinion nothing is more dinosaur like than a large Argus tripodding to gain a better vantage point. They are not good climbers or swimmers and prefer open grasslands. Sexing is difficult and the largest specimens are usually males.

### Temperature and UV Lighting

Argus monitors should be maintained between 85-90 degrees with a basking spot of 95 degrees. At night the temperature can drop to 75 degrees. Hours of daylight should be 12L/12D during a 24 hour period. Humidity should also be maintained at 60%-80%

UVB lighting is not a must for monitors, but is recommended. UVB lighting enables reptiles to metabolize calcium, by creating Vitamin D3. However, because their diet consists of rodents and other live prey, they can usually receive enough D3 and calcium through their diet. The bones of the prey will provide calcium, while the liver will provide Vitamin D3. Also it is very important to change your UVB light every 6-8 months, after this time the light stops producing adequate UVB. If you're not sure if your UV light is still producing UVB, bring it in and we'll be happy to test the light for you.



### Housing

Baby Argus monitors can be kept in a 29 gallon cage, but they grow quickly and will soon need larger housing. Adult Argus monitors should be kept in a cage that is at least 8' long by 4' deep. Females can be kept in smaller enclosures. Extremely large specimens may require room sized enclosures.

### Bedding

Our recommendation for bedding is bark or coconut bark. We also recommend a deep layer of bedding to allow your Argus monitor to dig.

### Calcium

A calcium and vitamin supplement should be put on all food that does not contain bones. When fed mice, rats, or fish, no supplement is needed.

### Food

Argus monitors are opportunistic hunters and are known to eat almost anything. Ideal foods are; mice, rats, crickets, superworms, beef heart, and hard boiled eggs. A mixed diet of these food items four to five times per week is ideal and will ensure proper growth and health.

### Cleaning and Handling

The terrarium should be cleaned as necessary. Any fecal matter or left over food should be cleaned out several times a week. The bedding should be completely changed once a month and fresh clean water should be provided at all times. The inside of the terrarium can be cleaned out with an appropriate reptile cage cleaner, we recommend Natural Chemistry's Healthy Habitat. Argus monitors can be handled on a daily basis but may take some time to tame down. Always wash your hands before and after handling them.

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**Prehistoric Pets Inc. (909) 465-6085**

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