

Prehistoric Pets Care Sheet

Nile Monitors (*Varanus niloticus*)

General Information

Nile monitors are located throughout Africa and are the largest lizard on that continent. There are two types of Nile monitors. First, is the standard species which has a blue tongue and 6-9 rows of spots located on the back between the front and back legs. The other type of Nile is a subspecies and is known as the Ornate Nile monitor. Ornate Nile monitors have a light colored tongue and 3-5 rows of spots located on their back. Nile monitors are large lizards and can reach six feet in total length. Ornate Nile monitors are typically larger and more heavily bodied. These lizards are excellent swimmers and can remain underwater for over an hour. We recommend providing a very large water bowl for your Nile to completely submerge itself.



Temperature and UV Lighting

Both species 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 70%-100%.

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 Nile monitors can be kept in a 29 gallon cage but they grow quickly and will soon need larger housing. Adult Nile 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, this bedding holds moisture very well and duplicates their natural environment.

Calcium

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

Food

Nile monitors are opportunistic hunters and are known to eat almost anything. Ideal foods are; mice, rats, fish, crawdads, 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. Nile 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.

www.reptileguru.com

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