

Prehistoric Pets Care Sheet

White-Throated Monitor (*Varanus albigularis*)

General Information

White-throated monitors are found throughout the savannahs of southern Africa. They prefer termite mounds or burrows and they are most active during the wet season when food is abundant. White-throats are a large powerful lizard and reach six feet in length. Wild white-throat monitors will eat any animal they can overpower and are immune to some types of snake venom. Captive breeding is somewhat common and large females can lay fifty eggs each year. Babies will hatch within 180 days and are much more colorful than adults. With proper care white-throat monitors can live over 20 years. Prehistoric Pets promotes responsible reptile ownership and we recommend locking cages that prevent accidental escape. Large monitors and other escaped reptiles can have a negative impact on the general public which can lead to a ban of reptile ownership.



Temperature and UV Lighting

White-throat monitors should be maintained between 85-90 degrees with a basking spot of 95 degrees. At night the temperature can drop to 70 degrees. Hours of daylight should be 12L/12D during a 24 hour period. Humidity should also be maintained above 65%. 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 white-throat monitors can be kept in a 29 gallon cage but they grow quickly and will soon need larger housing. Adult monitors should be kept in a cage that is at least 6' x 4'. Extremely large specimens may require room sized enclosures. Ideally, the cage should include multiple hiding spots to provide a sense of security.

Bedding

Our recommendation for bedding is bark or some type of mulch. This type of substrate holds moisture very well, allowing a higher humidity. Even though they are from Africa, they are not a desert species. Cages that are too dry can cause dehydration and shedding problems. We also recommend that you mist the bedding several times a week to increase humidity.

Food

White-throat monitors are opportunistic hunters and are known to eat almost anything. Ideal foods are; mice, rats, fish, crickets, superworms, nightcrawlers, 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.

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.

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. White-throat monitors can be handled on a daily basis and always wash your hands before and after handling them.

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Prehistoric Pets Inc. (909) 465-6085

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