Egyptian Fat Claw Scorpion

Common Name  Israeli Fat Claw scorpion, Egyptian Fat Claw scorpion

Scientific Name  *Scorpio maurus palmatus*

Description  A brown and yellow scorpion with distinctive spots on each joint of the legs, giving it a bit of a Meccano appearance. Heavy set claws which are dark brown to red on the pincers. It is a wide ranging common species. Most of the scorpions that become available are from Egypt. These are not a communal species. Although they are found living in near proximity to each other in the wild they can be very cannibalistic.

Housing  This is a burrowing scorpion and will need a minimum of 8x8 inches of floor space. The substrate should be at least 3 inches deep. A base layer of 2 inches of damp 50% terrarium sand and 50% coco humus. A layer of terrarium sand can then be added on top. This is really important. This is a burrowing scorpion. It will create its own burrow system in the sand and the burrow will need to be cool and humid, hence the under layer. A small shallow water dish should be available and I have witnessed these scorpions using the water dish on odd occasions. The enclosure will need to be able to hold an overhead lighting unit.

Climate  In the wild these scorpions undergo a vast temperature change every day. The enclosure needs to be heated to 30-32C during the day and dropped to 20-22C at night. The easiest way to achieve this is with a light canopy. The pictures above are Exo Terra Nano Vivarium with light canopy. In this is a 15W daylight (Not UVB) bulb. This raises the temperature to just over 30C for 12 hours on during the day and is then switched off at night to cool down to room temperature. A digital thermometer is used to monitor accurately the temperatures in the enclosure. Heat mats are of no use with this species and they should never be given under floor heating of any kind. It is a desert and scrubland animal and naturally burrows to keep cool and gain moisture from the burrow. You can make variations of this enclosure with different equipment but the overall results should create the above environment. A 50% humidity is ideal. The entire enclosure should be given a fine mist of water once a fortnight. Before the scorpion is introduced give the enclosure a good spray at least 24 hours before this allows the sand to clump a little and the scorpion will be able to burrow.

Feeding  One item of prey can be fed once every 7-9 days. Small crickets or roaches are readily accepted. Ensure livefood is gut loaded properly before feeding. No supplementation is required.

General  This is a very defensive scorpion and may well try to sting if provoked. Handling is not recommended. It has a venom of no medical significance. However some people can get a reaction and if so medical advice should be sought. Egyptian scorpions are regularly available and have been given a bad
reputation as being short lived. This is an environmental issue as keepers have tended to manage these as an arid desert species and have not given correct day and night differences in temperature. However, they are a fascinating and very attractive species to keep and if housed and managed correctly they can live for several years.

Nick Cousins

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