



Black Rock Scorpion

Urodacus manicatus

Black rock scorpions are one of the most common scorpions in the hobby. a mesic and semi arid species that grows to a max size of 30-50mm locale dependant. They can be found from Northern NSW, through VIC and SA and as far as the Mt Lofty Ranges. It lives quite the same to the Flinders Ranges scorpion occupying a scrape under a rock with a short burrow leading out to the entrance, they will seal off their scrape entrance in summer to protect against heat and water loss and during this time is when ecdysis (moulting) takes place. After the hot season scorpions start to appear at their scrape entrances again. Like other scorpions within the *Urodacus* genus the Black Rock scorpion has a mild venom it is similar in pain to that of the rest within the genus. refer to Flinders Ranges care guide for pain description. Like all Australian scorpions they are not considered medically significant, though if symptoms get worse or concerning seek medical attention immediately!

Invertebrates including scorpions grow by shedding their exoskeleton this is known as ecdysis or moulting. Other invertebrates may continue to moult throughout their whole lives while *Urodacus* Scorpions will only moult a total number of 5 times throughout their whole lives, as follows: 1st instar(newborn), 2nd instar(4 weeks), 3rd instar(1year), 4th instar(2years), 5th instar(3years), 6th instar(4 years - Adult). they usually moult at night out of the way with less chance of being disturbed.

Maternal:

Urodacus scorpions have very long gestation periods, which can last from 12 - 18 months. This species can have roughly 30 - 40 babies and give live birth. They move onto mum's back shortly after birth which will help them self

regulate moisture absorption, they'll remain there for several weeks before dispersing to begin life on their own.

No food should be offered to mum and babies during this period.

Once they disperse only then should they be individually separated and fed a cricket leg each and mum fed up to regain nutrients.

If they seem to disperse too early before they've moulted it could be that mum is losing moisture content so she is opting for her survival over maternal care. If this happens mist mums enclosure and just put all the babies in a separate one fully sealed and similar setting to that of the mums, do not offer them food until they moult to 2nd instar and darken.

Food:

Live prey weekly, although pre-killed prey may also be accepted.

Crickets and cockroaches are the best choice of feeder for pretty much all predatory invertebrates, but you can use other things like mealworms but they have more fatty content and are best spared for as a snack. They can handle large prey especially bigger size scorpions as they will overpower it with both their large claws and then also use venom from their sting to assist by paralysing the prey for them.

Water:

Keep the substrate misted and damp enough so that it holds humidity and can hold shape when you grab some in your hand. Your scorpion will drink by absorbing moisture from their substrate in through layers in their cuticle so they don't require a water bowl, regular misting of the enclosure and a good water gradient will be best so that the scorpion can self regulate as it pleases/needs.

Enclosure:

This species is quite suited to captivity, being more fungal resistant which allows for them to be kept completely without ventilation without any problem. keep as you would Flinders Ranges just they aren't as susceptible to mycosis so you'd keep the Flinders on the drier side with Black Rock scorpions preferring damper conditions for a longer part of the year. Housed best in an enclosure size of around 20x20cm.

Substrate:

Mix peat moss with water till it clumps and holds but doesn't drip excess water out then mix through dry sand to a 50/50 ratio in the bottom of the enclosure at

a depth of around 3-5 cm.

Place a flat rock, bark, leaf litter and other forms of hides and decorations in the enclosure so your scorpion can take refuge and have a good place to ambush prey.

Temperature:

The best temperatures are 15 - 25°C, with 25°C being optimal.

Handling:

They can be handled but never will become completely complacent when doing so and keep in mind that they still have the mildly venomous sting as well.

Lifespan:

They can live long lives of about 8 years.

