

Uromastyx



Niger Uromastyx (*Uromastyx geyri*)

Description:

Niger Uromastyx are robust lizards that come in reddish or yellow variations. The slightly larger males can grow from 13-16 inches long while females only get 11-14 inches long. These lizards can live over 12 years if taken care of properly. These are one of the hardiest lizards available and have friendly temperaments.

Habitat and Tank Requirements:

This species is native to the deserts of Niger.

Adults do well with sand, sand/gravel mix, or reptile carpet as a substrate. Be sure to put enough rocks and wood in the tank for your lizard to hide in.

Because of their size, a single Niger Uromastyx may need up to a 45 gallon tank. A screen cover is recommended for your tank, as it allows better airflow and heating.

Niger Uromastyx require 12-14 hours of light a day. A comfortable temperature for these lizards is around 80-100° F during the day and about 65-75° F at night. LEDs or other low-wattage light bulbs work best for maintaining these temperatures.

In addition to UV light, these lizards need a hotter basking area of 110-120° F. You can use either a ceramic heat emitter or a reptile basking light for this. Heat rocks are not recommended as they can burn your animal.

Your tank should have a small, shallow bowl of water that is cleaned daily. This is for your lizard to drink from as well as wade in. Some lizards won't drink from a bowl, and in fact the Niger Uromastyx gets most of its water from the food it eats. Spray greens with water to give them extra hydration.

Diet:

Niger Uromastyx are herbivores. Most of their diet should consist of dark, leafy greens such as escarole,

endive, collards, and dandelion leaves. Light greens, like lettuce, aren't ideal because they have very little nutritional value. These lizards will also eat edible flowers and fruit, though citrus should be avoided because of its high acidity. Carrots and other vegetables high in Vitamin A should be given only rarely, as too much can lead to Vitamin A poisoning. It is recommended that food be dusted with calcium to prevent bone softening.

Handling:

Allow your lizard time to become accustomed to its new home before handling them extensively. Handling them little by little over a period of time lets the animal get used to you and reduces stress.