

Stick Insect Care Sheet



Stick insects are fascinating creatures found worldwide, thriving in warm and tropical environments. They come in a fantastic variety of shapes, sizes, and colours, with some mimicking actual sticks and others resembling leaves. Ensuring that your Stick Insect's habitat closely mirrors its natural environment is essential for its well-being, so keep its diet and surroundings consistent. Additionally, stick insects can coexist peacefully with others, provided they share a similar habitat and are given ample space. Exploring their unique adaptations is exciting, and caring for them can be a rewarding experience!

Temperature

Stick insects are fascinating creatures, each with their ideal temperature range for a happy, healthy life! Typically, they thrive in conditions between 18°C and 25°C, but it's essential to research the specific needs of your species to ensure their well-being. A great way to maintain the correct temperature in their enclosure is by using a heat mat. Just remember to place the mat on the outside; this way, you avoid any risk of harming your little friends. Positioning the mat on one side of the enclosure helps create a delightful temperature gradient, allowing your stick insects to choose their preferred cosy spot. With a bit of care, you can provide a wonderful home for these remarkable insects!

Get to know

Getting to know your Stick Insects and understanding their unique needs is incredibly rewarding! These intriguing creatures are typically simple to care for and make excellent pets for children. However, they are delicate and should always be handled gently. When picking them up, be aware that they can grip tightly, so we want to avoid any accidental injuries, such as a limb coming off. If a Stick Insect feels threatened, it may become still or sway gently, mimicking the movement of a branch in the wind—this is entirely natural! As they become familiar with you, you'll notice their confidence grow, and soon they'll happily crawl onto your hand.

Enclosure

Creating a home for your stick insects is a rewarding venture! Whether you choose a terrarium or a net cage, it's essential to ensure it's spacious enough for their needs. Aim for a height that's at least three times the length of your stick insect's body, and a width that's double. If you're keeping multiple insects, be sure to add extra space, especially in width, to ensure they remain comfortable.

These fascinating creatures require that extra height not just for roaming, but also for a smooth moulting process. When using a non-net cage, proper ventilation is key. This ensures a fresh flow of oxygen and keeps bacteria at bay. Also, don't overlook the security of entrances; your curious little friends can squeeze through surprisingly small gaps! With these considerations in mind, you'll create an inviting and safe environment for your stick insects to thrive.

LIFESPAN

1 to 2 years
in captivity

SIZE

2.5cm to 30cm
Depending on the
species

TEMPERATURE

18 °C - 25°C

HUMIDITY

60% - 80%

Environment

Substrate: Stick insects thrive in moist environments, so creating a humidity-rich habitat is essential for their well-being. Using coco fibre as the primary substrate is a fantastic choice, as it retains moisture wonderfully. Additionally, incorporating some sphagnum moss will further enhance humidity levels, ensuring your little companions feel right at home. They'll truly appreciate the care you provide!

Décor: Creating an excellent habitat in your vivarium is essential for your stick insects! Since their diet consists of natural foliage, you won't need artificial plants. Incorporate plenty of branches and sticks for climbing and camouflage, allowing them to feel secure. Adding small rocks or pebbles can enhance their environment, offering even more opportunities for exploration. Remember, providing hiding spots will help your stick insects feel right at home. With these thoughtful touches, you'll create a vibrant and stimulating sanctuary for them to thrive!

Cleaning: Keeping your terrarium clean is essential for your stick insects' health! Regular spot cleaning as you notice waste can make a big difference. Depending on your insect family, aim for a thorough clean at least once a week. This includes using a safe disinfectant for a deep clean and refreshing the substrate.

Diet

Feeding: Watching your stick insects enjoy their meals is such a delightful experience! They thrive on fresh leaves, but remember, different species have their favourites, so a little research will go a long way in keeping them happy. Fresh leaves are a must, and they absolutely love flowers too! The great thing is, you can offer plenty since they'll nibble until they're satisfied. Enjoy the process of caring for these fascinating creatures; it's truly rewarding to see them thrive!

Water: Let's make sure your stick insect has fresh water every day! Place a shallow bowl at the cooler end of their habitat to prevent any accidents; safety first! You can also mist their enclosure; they'll happily sip the water droplets from the leaves and walls.



Stick insect limbs

Stick Insects Limbs

Stick insects are truly remarkable creatures! Did you know they can regenerate their limbs? This incredible process takes place during growth after they moult. What's even more fascinating is their ability to shed a leg to escape danger voluntarily. If an adult stick insect loses a leg, there's no need to worry! They can continue to thrive and lead a healthy, fulfilling life without it.

Health & Welfare

A vibrant stick insect shows signs of good health by being alert, enjoying its meals and hydration, and shedding its skin with ease! If it's an Australian Macleay's Spectre, you'll see it glide gracefully and curl its tail defensively. A healthy stick insect confidently sheds its skin flawlessly and moves its legs smoothly; these are wonderful signs of its well-being and vitality!



Moulting

Like many fascinating insects, stick insects undergo a remarkable process of moulting their exoskeletons, which is a clear indicator of their growth. As they mature, this process will gradually slow down. After moulting, you'll be thrilled to see that they've increased in size! It's quite a sight, especially since stick insects often hang upside down during this transition. That's why ensuring their terrarium is tall enough is crucial for their well-being.

Maintaining the proper humidity is essential, too; it supports a smoother moulting process and prevents dehydration. A well-maintained enclosure is key—proper care helps your stick insect thrive, reducing the risk of deformities or complications post-moult. After a moult, it's best to let them be for a while, as their new exoskeleton will be soft and needs time to harden for protection. It's all part of this exciting journey of growth!

Diseases and Concerns

Stick insects, while appearing small and delicate, are surprisingly resilient creatures. However, like all living beings, they can face health challenges that require our attention. One crucial aspect to consider is overcrowding. While many stick insects can coexist, insufficient space can lead to stress, aggression, and even cannibalism. To ensure the happiness of your little friends, providing ample space is key! Additionally, keep an eye out for fungal infections, which can be particularly harmful—especially if green spores begin to form on their bodies. The best way to combat this risk is by maintaining a clean enclosure and creating a properly humid environment.

Before welcoming these fascinating creatures into your home, it's essential to do your research. Understanding their needs will help you identify early signs of potential health issues. If you suspect any illness, don't hesitate to reach out to a local veterinarian or an invertebrate specialist for guidance.

Transport

When taking your animals out with you, you must ensure their travel box is safe for them. Ensure there is enough room for your Stick Insect to sit comfortably, but not so much that they can be knocked around. If they are new to travel, try covering their travel box with a cloth to create a dark space that helps calm them. Make sure it is well ventilated, but make sure there's no escape. Heat is vital; bring a battery heat pack or a hot water bottle to help provide heat so they stay comfortable.

Stick Insect

