

Praying Mantis

Care Sheet



The fascinating Praying Mantis is found in warm habitats all around the globe! These incredible creatures have developed clever adaptations, like their excellent camouflage and lightning-fast movements, to thrive in their environment. Plus, their extraordinary 3D eyesight allows them to capture prey with incredible precision. To ensure your Praying Mantis stays healthy and happy, it's essential to maintain a habitat that resembles their natural surroundings, focusing on a consistent diet and environment. It's also best to house them alone to avoid stress. This guide is here to walk you through the essential care needs of these captivating insects, but remember, each species is unique, so take the time to explore the specific care requirements for your Mantis!

Temperature

Praying Mantises thrive in warm environments, so it's essential to create a cosy habitat for them! To achieve this, consider using a heat mat with a thermostat, placing it on one side of the enclosure. This approach will provide a delightful, warm end and a cooler area for them to explore. It's best to avoid heat lamps, as they can dry out your Mantises. Aim to maintain a comfortable temperature between 21°C and 30°C, depending on your specific species. Don't forget to monitor the temperature regularly with a thermometer to ensure your little friends are happy and healthy!.

Get to know

Getting to know your Praying Mantis is one of the most important things you can do. Ensuring they feel calm and safe in your presence is crucial, as you will be their protector. Praying Mantis is a very cautious creature and can become stressed easily. Learning to recognise the signs that indicate when they are uncomfortable or unwell will help ensure they feel secure.

When you first bring a Praying Mantis home, it's important to let it settle into its new environment. Gradually introduce yourself over time until you both become familiar with each other. Make sure you don't just go in and grab them, as it can mimic a predator in their eyes. Put out your hand for your Leopard Gecko to know there is no threat.

Enclosure

When housing a Praying Mantis, their enclosure must provide good ventilation to reduce bacteria buildup and ensure a proper flow of oxygen. Additionally, the doors should be secured to prevent any chance of escape. You can purchase special locks designed for your vivarium to enhance security.

Choosing the correct size for your enclosure is crucial. You want to provide enough space for your Praying Mantis without going overboard. The general rule is that the enclosure should be 3x the length of your mantis in height and 2x the length of your mantis in width. Make sure you don't give your mantis too big an enclosure, as a fall could be fatal for them.

LIFESPAN

6-12

Months

SIZE

1cm to 17cm

TEMPERATURE

21 °C - 30 °C

Depending on the species

HUMIDITY

60% - 80%

WILD
Wild Science

Environment

Substrate: Praying Mantis often come from warm and humid places, so having a substrate that holds humidity is best. For your enclosure, it is recommended to use coco fibre. Avoid using calcisand, beech chips, or other non-natural substrates, as these can lead to health problems for your Mantis. Ensure that you mist your substrate every day to maintain the humidity.

Décor: Creating the perfect décor for your vivarium is essential for your Mantis' happiness and health! Be sure to design an inviting space with plenty of climbing opportunities while avoiding too much clutter to help them easily spot their prey. Adding sphagnum moss not only enhances humidity but also creates a cosy atmosphere. Consider using stone slabs, sturdy branches, and even some vibrant faux plants to add variety and visual appeal. Just be mindful to ensure everything is stable and secure to keep your Praying Mantis safe and thriving! Happy decorating!

Cleaning: It is very important to maintain a clean terrarium. Spot cleaning involves cleaning up waste as you notice it. At least once a month, perform a deep clean of the enclosure using a safe disinfectant and change all the substrate.

Diet

Feeding: Praying Mantis feed on live invertebrates such as crickets, locusts, fruit flies, and more. What you feed your praying mantis will depend on their size, but primarily will be smaller bugs. It's also essential to nourish the invertebrates with various fruits and vegetables to enhance their nutritional value before the Mantis consumes them. Your Praying Mantis will need to be fed every 2-3 days. If it hasn't eaten its food, make sure to remove it.

Water: Ensure your Praying Mantis has access to fresh water daily. You can do this by spraying/misting their enclosure. Make sure not to give a bowl of water, as they could drown in it.



Praying Mantis- Male or Female

Praying Mantis Gender

Sometimes it can be difficult to tell whether or not your praying mantis is male or female, especially when it is small but there is a way. To determine a praying mantis's sex, look at its abdomen's segment count (females have 6, males have 8 or more), body size (females are larger and bulkier), and wing length (male wings often reach beyond the abdomen, while female wings are shorter). The antennae are also a clue, with males generally having longer, thicker antennae for scent detection.



Health & Welfare

A healthy praying mantis is alert, active, and has clear, undamaged skin. Its abdomen should be plump but not swollen, and if it is an adult, it should have fully developed wings that are free of deformities. Healthy mantises move around easily and readily accept live food. Their colouration typically blends in with their surroundings, and their wing buds should be plump and inflated after their final moult, just before they become fully functional wings.



Moulting

Praying mantises undergo a moulting process several times throughout their lives, during which they shed their exoskeleton. This process allows them to grow larger and requires a new exoskeleton to accommodate their increased size. You can tell when your mantis is about to moult, as it will likely refuse food and become less active. Additionally, you may observe it hanging upside down from a surface, typically positioned high up to ensure sufficient space.

During the moulting process, the mantis hangs and slowly extracts itself from its old skin, a process that can take several hours. After moulting, the new exoskeleton is soft and must harden for at least a day before offering food again to avoid complications. It is also crucial not to touch your mantis or move its enclosure while it is moulting, as this could cause it to fall, which can be fatal.

Diseases and Concerns

Praying mantises are very fragile and delicate creatures that require careful handling and care. Here are some primary concerns to watch for with a pet praying mantis:

Dehydration: This is a significant issue. If you find your mantis floppy and lying on its back, it is likely dehydrated. To prevent this, make sure to mist their enclosure daily.

Eye Scratching: This problem often arises when mantises are housed together. They may rub their heads against the enclosure, which can lead to scratches that may become infected.

It's essential to thoroughly research potential diseases and concerns that can affect your pets. If you are concerned about your Praying Mantis, then get in touch with an invertebrate specialist who can give you advice on what to do for your Mantis.

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 Praying Mantis to sit comfortably, but not so much that they can be knocked around. If they are new to travel, consider placing a cloth over their travel box to create darkness, which can help 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.

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