

Medusa Exotics

CARE INFORMATION SHEET

INDIAN STICK INSECTS (*carausius morosus*)

An easy-to-care-for, hardy and tolerant species of stick insect, these are attractive and not aggressive. Adults attain a size of approximately 4 inches, they are usually green in colour although shades may vary, with red flashes on the top of the front legs. This is an all female species, they are parthenogenic, i.e. will reproduce without the presence of a male, males are rare.

Housing

These insects can be kept in a glass or plastic aquarium with a secure lid, or in a mesh type cage. Be sure to allow sufficient height in the tank for the insects to hang vertically in order to successfully shed their skins, not allowing enough height or space for this process can result in stunted, deformed insects. Allow at the very least double the adult length as a guide for the required height. You can cover the bottom with a suitable substrate, e.g. peat or bark, you can also use paper, but this will quickly look untidy with the insects droppings falling onto it. Clean out the tank at regular intervals.

Temperature and humidity

Keep the tank at normal room temperature, avoiding extremes of heat and cold. Don't site the tank in direct sunlight as this will be overpowering for the insects. A light misting spray of water every 2 or 3 days will be enough to maintain humidity and to provide the insects with the opportunity to drink. If the weather is hot and dry, spray more often. Do not provide a water dish as the insects can drown in this, particularly tiny nymphs.

Feeding

These insects are very easy to feed, as their preferred food is privet, which in this country is generally available throughout the year, you can also offer bramble. You just need to place appropriately sized branches of the food plants in the tank. They will last longer if you wrap the cut ends of the stems in water-soaked kitchen paper, and bind it in foil or a small plastic bag sealed with tape. Do not stand them in pots of water as the insects will wander into them and drown. Replace the branches as soon as they are dead or eaten.

General care advice

Stick insects are easy to care for and should have no problems provided you follow the advice above. Reproduction will occur as this species is parthenogenic, they will produce eggs in large quantities which are just dropped onto the cage floor. Population growth can be controlled by removing and crushing the eggs. If left alone, the eggs will hatch into tiny versions of the adults, which will gradually grow and go through several moults before reaching adult size. Nymphs can easily escape through small slats in the lids of certain plastic aquarium types, you can avoid this by stretching a piece of cloth under the lid. The insects will tolerate careful handling, they are not toxic and not aggressive.