

Savannah Monitor Care Guide

Presented by Custom Creatures Pet Shop

Basic Info

Species: *Varanus exanthematicus* (Savannah Monitor)

Lifespan: 10-15+ years in captivity

Adult Size: 2.5-4 feet

Temperament: Can be defensive but may tame with regular handling

Best for: Experienced reptile keepers with space and knowledge of large monitors

Enclosure Setup

Tank Size:

- Babies: 40-75 gallon tank minimum
- Adults: Custom 6x3x3 ft enclosure or larger
- Must have secure lid and strong materials - they dig and push

Temperature & Heating:

- Basking area: 130-140°F
- Ambient daytime temp: 80-90°F
- Cool side: 75-80°F
- Night: can drop to 70-75°F
- Use halogen basking bulbs or radiant heat panels

Humidity:

- Maintain 40-60% ambient humidity
- Provide a moist burrow or humid hide with 60-70% humidity
- Mist or use a humidifier for moisture control

Lighting:

- High-output UVB (T5 HO 10.0 or Arcadia 12%) required
- Provide 12-hour day/night cycle
- UVB bulb must span at least 2/3 of the enclosure

Substrate:

- 8-16 inches of diggable substrate: organic topsoil, sand/soil mix, or clay/loam
- Spot clean regularly and replace as needed

Décor & Enrichment:

- Logs, ledges, hides, branches, and digging pits
- Heavy water bowl large enough to soak in

Diet & Feeding

Feeding Frequency:

- Babies: Feed daily
- Adults: Feed 2-4x/week

Diet:

- Staple: whole prey (mice, quail, chicks), insects (dubia, crickets, roaches, superworms)
- Occasional: boiled egg, snails, crawfish, cooked lean meats
- Avoid: dog/cat food, too much fat or fruit

Supplementation:

- Calcium with D3: 2-3x/week (especially for young monitors)
- Multivitamin: 1x/week
- Gut-load insects 24 hours before feeding

Water & Hydration:

- Provide large water dish for soaking and drinking
- Keep clean and change daily

Handling & Behavior

Handling:

- Start slow - babies can be defensive
- Use gloves initially, support entire body
- Daily interaction can help build trust

Behavior to Expect:

- Diurnal, very intelligent, and curious
- Will dig, bask, and explore regularly
- Can become food-aggressive if not handled routinely

Supplies Checklist

- Large custom enclosure (minimum 6x3x3 ft for adults)
- UVB lighting and high-intensity basking light
- Deep substrate for digging
- Water bowl large enough to soak in
- Digital thermometer and hygrometer
- Insect feeders and whole prey options
- Calcium and vitamin supplements
- Secure hides and basking platforms

Contact Us

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We're here to help!