

# Black Roughneck Monitor Care Guide

*Presented by Custom Creatures Pet Shop*

## Basic Info

Species: *Varanus rudicollis* (Black Roughneck Monitor)

Lifespan: 10-20+ years in captivity

Adult Size: 3-4.5 feet

Temperament: Shy, intelligent, and can become calm with regular handling

Best for: Intermediate to advanced keepers experienced with semi-arboreal monitors

## Enclosure Setup

Tank Size:

- Babies: 75-120 gallon minimum
- Adults: Custom 6x3x5 ft enclosure or larger - vertical space important
- Must be secure and allow climbing, burrowing, and swimming

Temperature & Heating:

- Basking area: 120-130°F
- Ambient daytime temp: 80-88°F
- Cool side: 75-80°F
- Night: Do not drop below 72°F
- Use halogen bulbs or ceramic emitters with thermostat control

Humidity:

- Maintain 70-90% humidity
- Use a large water tub, frequent misting, and/or a fogger
- Enclosure must retain humidity without staying wet

Lighting:

- High-output UVB (T5 HO 10.0 or Arcadia 12%) required
- 12-hour day/night cycle
- UVB exposure essential for calcium metabolism and health

Substrate:

- 12+ inches of diggable material: soil, sand, and clay mix
- Bioactive setups are ideal but require maintenance

Décor & Enrichment:

- Strong vertical climbing branches and basking ledges
- Cork tubes, heavy hides, logs, and a large soaking tub

## **Diet & Feeding**

Feeding Frequency:

- Babies: Feed daily
- Adults: Feed 3-4x/week

Diet:

- Primary: roaches, crickets, dubia, hornworms, BSFL, small rodents
- Occasional: eggs, snails, shellfish, lean meat
- Avoid: cat/dog food, overly fatty meats, and feeder fish high in thiaminase

Supplementation:

- Calcium with D3: 2-3x/week
- Multivitamin: 1x/week
- Gut-load all feeder insects before feeding

Water & Hydration:

- Provide a water basin large enough for soaking
- Change water daily and maintain proper humidity

## **Handling & Behavior**

Handling:

- Begin with slow, calm movements
- Use gloves or a hook if monitor is defensive
- With time, can become calm and exploratory

Behavior to Expect:

- Diurnal, shy, and semi-arboreal
- Will dig, climb, swim, and hide frequently
- Smart and observant - builds trust over time

## **Supplies Checklist**

- Large vertical enclosure (6x3x5 ft minimum)
- UVB lighting and high-temp basking bulbs
- Thermostat, thermometer, and hygrometer
- Deep diggable substrate
- Water basin large enough for soaking
- Gut-loaded insects, whole prey, and supplements
- Strong branches, logs, hides, and foliage

## **Contact Us**

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We're here to help!