

Emperor Scorpion

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species profile: emperor SCORPION

Also known as the Imperial Scorpion, the Emperor Scorpion is one of the most popular pet scorpions. Fairly docile and not dangerous to humans, they make suitable pets for beginners as well as more experienced owners.

Species Profile: Emperor Scorpion

Scientific Name: *Pandinus imperator*

Natural Environment: Tropical rainforests of Africa

Average Size: 6" to 8"

Average Life Span: 2 to 6 years

Appearance: The Emperor Scorpion has a glossy black or blue coloring. It has two large "pedipalps," claws, and a tail that ends in a "telson," a segment at the end of the tail that contains the venom gland and the stinger. Its abdomen has two segments, its preabdomen seven, and its posterior five. Whitish membranes connect the body segments.

Habitat

Size: 10 gallon terrarium for one, 20 to 30 gallon terrarium for groups.

Lighting:	Emperor Scorpions are nocturnal, and they are highly sensitive to UV light. Full spectrum UV lights should never be used. They have no special lighting needs overall, but you can use a low wattage incandescent red bulb at night to observe their activity.
Temperature:	76° to 86° F; the cage should have a temperature gradient so that the scorpions can regulate their body temperatures by moving between hot and cooler areas. A good way to create this gradient is to use an under tank heating pad under approximately 1/3 of the habitat. Monitor temperatures with a thermometer .
Humidity:	80%; to maintain high humidity levels, mist the enclosure weekly, add moss on top of the substrate, and dampen the substrate under one of the hiding spots regularly. Monitor humidity with a hygrometer .
Housing:	<p>The size of the terrarium will vary depending on the number of scorpions you keep, but regardless of whether you have one or five, you need to provide ample floor space. Scorpions spend their time on the floor of their environment, so they need plenty of room to move around and burrow.</p> <p>Accessories that you should place in the habitat include rocks, logs, cork bark, commercial reptile shelters, and other items for hiding spots, nontoxic plants, and moss. Moss is not necessary, but it will help to keep the humidity level high. Just be sure to leave some of the substrate uncovered so your scorpions can create burrows in it.</p>
Substrate:	Peat moss , potting soil; the substrate should be at least 3" to 6" deep to provide plenty of room for digging and burrowing.
Diet/Feeding:	<p>Emperor Scorpions are carnivores, and in the wild they feed on insects, spiders, small vertebrates such as baby lizards, and more. In captivity, you should feed them crickets, mealworms, and the occasional pre-killed pinkie mouse.</p> <p>Because they are nocturnal, Emperor Scorpions should be fed at night. Feed them every other day, and start out by giving each one or two crickets at a time. If you house multiple scorpions in the same enclosure, be sure to put plenty of food in at once so they don't fight over it. All food should be dusted with a calcium and vitamin supplement.</p>

Behavior/Interaction: Scorpions are social animals; in the wild they live in large groups in a system of interconnecting tunnels. Keep in mind that a larger group will require a larger habitat and more accessories, and be ready to separate them if you see any signs of aggression.

Though an Emperor Scorpion's venom is not toxic to humans, we do not recommend handling them. Their venom is contained within the telson (stinger). Excessive handling is not only stressful for the scorpions, but it can be dangerous for you if you are allergic to their venom. An allergic reaction can cause difficulty breathing, excessive swelling, or prolonged pain, in any case you should seek medical attention.



The scorpion's claws can also be dangerous as they are very strong and can draw blood when pinched. If you have to move the scorpion, wear gloves or use [forceps](#).

Interesting Facts: Emperor Scorpions turn bright green, or "fluoresce," when exposed to black light. They are often used in movies because they are not considered dangerous to humans and actors can get close to them.