



\*Pet Planet Trowbridge

## Emperor Scorpion (*Pandinus imperator*)

## Red Clawed Scorpion (*Pandinus cavimanus*)

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### **Bold, African Emperors**

Emperor scorpions are a large, heavy bodied scorpion ranging from blackish to reddish black in color, with large pedipalps (claws or pincers) designed for grasping prey. Emperor scorpions are among the largest species of scorpions in the world, and are primarily burrowing to terrestrial species. Emperor scorpions have formerly been among the most widely kept species of scorpion in the pet industry due to their large size, docile nature and relatively mild sting and venom (although it is always possible for some individuals to have a severe allergic reaction to any arachnid bite or sting). However, their availability in recent years has declined due to overcollection, and as such, are now a CITES listed species. The Tanzanian red clawed scorpion, *P. cavimanus*, is a slightly smaller species in the same genus that has similar care requirements, but tends to be somewhat more nervous and willing to sting. This species is characterized by their reddish-brown pedipalps or claws. As with many other scorpions, emperor scorpions also contain properties within their exo-skeletons that enable them to glow a turquoise bluish-green under a fluorescent UV light. These scorpions also possess additional sensory hairs on their claws, legs, and tail that enable them to detect the vibrations of potential prey through the air and the ground.

### **Taxonomy**

**Life:** All living, physical, and animate entities

**Domain:** Eukaryota

**Kingdom:** Animalia

**Phylum:** Arthropoda

**Subphylum:** Chelicerata

**Class:** Arachnida

**Order:** Scorpiones

**Family:** Scorpionidae

**Subfamily:** Scorpioninae

**Genus:** *Pandinus*

**Species:** *Pandinus imperator*\* and *Pandinus cavimanus*\*

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*\*Taxonomy subject to change and revision.*

### **Lifespan and Longevity**

Emperor and red clawed scorpions can attain longevity of 5 to 10 years or more if cared for correctly.

### **Distribution and Habitat**

Emperor scorpions are native to the humid, tropical lowland regions of the savannahs and rainforests of western Africa. They may also be found in semi-arid climates as well. These scorpions are also good burrowers, and will burrow or seek refuge beneath rocks, logs, and other debris, as well as within termite mounds.

### **Conservation Status**

Not Evaluated for the IUCN Red List (NE) or otherwise Data Deficient (DD).

### **Legal and Regulatory Status (\*Subject to Change)**

Pandinus imperator are CITES Appendix II as of October 2017. Also consult with your local, municipal, and state ordinances and regulations for any ownership restrictions.

### **Experience Level Required**

Novice/Beginner.

### **Size**

Emperor and red clawed scorpions are medium sized to large scorpion species, reaching anywhere from 4 to 9 ½ inches on average.

### **Housing and Enclosure**

Provide a sturdy, secure, and escape proof terrarium or enclosure 5 to 10 gallons in size with a secure top for one or two adult scorpions. Several of the acrylic displays and enclosures that are now manufactured for housing arachnids, insects, and other invertebrates can also be used. Emperor scorpions can be kept communally provided sufficient enclosure space. Acceptable substrate to use can include slightly moist pesticide free potting soil, cypress mulch, coconut fiber, or similar substrates 3 to 4 inches in depth. Decorations and/or other cage furnishings and hide boxes, cork, or bark slabs can also be included as well for additional retreats that these nocturnal to crepuscular and secretive scorpions prefer. A fairly small, shallow water dish can also be provided, and should be cleaned regularly. Maintain humidity at 60 to 80% with some sphagnum moss as well.

### **Temperature, Lighting, and Humidity**

Most species of scorpions have simple and undemanding heating and lighting requirements in captivity, and do not require additional UVA/UVB lighting, although providing it can be greatly beneficial for your scorpion's health, immune system, and overall wellness. Emperor scorpions do best at room temperature between 80 to 85 degrees. For any supplemental heating that may be needed, use a low wattage incandescent or UVA/UVB bulb, radiant or ceramic heat emitter, or UTH (under tank heating element). More specific lighting, heating, and humidity product suggestions and recommendations that can best suit one's needs, as well as those of one's animals can be given as well.

### **Feeding, Diet, and Nutrition**

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***Insectivorous to Carnivorous;*** In the wild, emperor and red clawed scorpions are primarily insectivorous, meaning they eat insects and other invertebrates. They will also occasionally eat smaller vertebrates as well if they can catch and subdue them. In captivity, these scorpions can be fed a variety of appropriately sized feeder insects such as crickets, roaches, mealworms, superworms, and waxworms. Feeder insects should be gut-loaded in order to increase their optimal nutritional value. This will promote optimal exoskeleton growth and development. Any uneaten food items should be cleaned and removed after a day or two. Their feeding frequency will depend on the age, size, and overall health of your animal. Use care as to not overfeed even invertebrates, as obesity and other health related issues can still become an issue with them. More specific dietary and supplementary product suggestions and recommendations that can best suit one's needs, as well as those of one's animals can be given as well.

### **Handling**

Emperor scorpions are typically a docile and slow moving species are reluctant to sting, and can be handled carefully so as to avoid injuring the scorpion. Scorpions are fragile animals, and accidentally dropping one can result in the rupture of its internal organs and/or exoskeleton, causing death to your scorpion. Although the Emperor scorpion's venom is relatively mild and weak, with most being lesser than or just about equal to a bee sting, medical attention should still be sought from any apparent allergic reaction to a sting from this species.

**\*\*Also be sure to practice basic cleanliness and hygiene associated with proper husbandry after touching or handling any animals or animal enclosures to prevent the possibility of contracting salmonellosis or any other zoonotic pathogens\*\***

### **Contact**

Authored by Eric Roscoe. For any additional questions, comments, and/or concerns regarding this animal, group of animals, or this care sheet, please email and contact the Madison Area Herpetological Society at [info@madisonherps.org](mailto:info@madisonherps.org)

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