

Husbandry Data Sheet

Common Name: New Guinea walkingstick **Latin Name:** *Eurycantha calcarata*

Family: Phasmid

Order: Insect

Class: Arthropod

Phylum: Invertebrate

Natural History: This species is found on the Bismark archipelago of Papua New Guinea. Males are easily differentiated from the females by the presence of long sharp spines on the femurs of the hind legs. When threatened, the abdomen is arched while the animal stands rigidly with the hind legs in the air. While both sexes can then pinch strongly with the hind legs, the males' spurs can draw human blood or crush to death any insects of smaller or similar size. I have read that the natives of Papua New Guinea have used these spurs as fish hooks. Males also lack an ovipositor and can produce a strong skunky odor when disturbed. Young can be heavily marked with green and brown, but adults are all uniformly brown.

Permits Required: Yes

Life Stage: Adult

Ease of Care: Easy

Housing:

Temp: 75 to 85 F

Humidity: mist twice a day

Substrate: potting soil

of Animals per Exhibit: Variable; growing animals need space for proper moulting; cannibalism can occur in the event of overcrowding. I have kept as many as 10 adults in a 20 gallon long aquarium comfortably.

Choose One: Colony

Compatible Species: None

Enclosure Description: Currently kept off exhibit in 20 gallon long aquarium. Juveniles are kept in plastic 'pal pen' containers.

Lighting/Photoperiod: Standard fluorescent lighting / approx. 12-12

Furniture/Props: Sticks for climbing and moulting from, cork bark slabs for hiding under. Juveniles seem to do fine with only potted pothos for all of their needs.

Escape Concerns: Juveniles wander and can slip through small holes; make sure that lids provide air circulation without allowing gaps that juveniles can slip through.

Other Concerns/Precautions: Adult males can pinch; see 'Husbandry Keeper Safety' below

Husbandry

Diet/Frequency of Feeding: Oak leaves while available, pothos during remainder of year. Food should always be present. Other accepted host plants have been recorded as viburnum, crabapples, mulberry, benjamin fig, philodendrons, rose, ivy, hawthorn, bramble, magnolia, cherry, guava, eucalyptus, raspberry, hazel, and more.

Water Source/Frequency: mist twice a day

Care: Daily

Enrichment: N/A

Medical/Health Concerns: Juveniles will begin to die off if they become too crowded or if air circulation is not adequate.

Treatment: Monitor size of group and reduce size of individual groups if required.

Keeper Safety: Adults, especially males, will pinch fingers with their large hind femoral spurs. Watch out, they are sharp, and will hold on tightly for long periods of time. They can break the skin!

Other Concerns/Precautions: Eggs incubate at captive temperature in peat moss for 5 to 6 months. Nymphs can take up to 6 months to mature when provided with adequate ventilation, space, food availability, and humidity.

Education

Do you handle species directly with the guests? : No

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If Yes or No how do you use the species with the guest:exhibit only

Conservation/Population Status:N/A

Message:Animal diversity

Personal Comments:Because they are large and impressive looking, these animals are very popular with the public. Ease of care make them an ideal display animal. If colony is large, acquiring enough food can become problematic.

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