



## CARING FOR YOUR NILE AND ORNATE NILE MONITORS

**Scientific Name:** *Varanus nolicus* spp.

**Native to:** *Eastern and Northern Africa*

**Maximum Length:** 7 feet. Average is 5-6 feet

**Life Span:** Up to 20 years

### CHARACTERISTICS:

While beautiful and voracious eaters, Nile and Ornate Nile monitors are best suited for an advanced reptile keeper. They are known for being temperamental and require large living spaces. Nile and Ornate Nile Monitors are great swimmers, so be sure to provide a large enough aquatic area for them to submerge themselves in. Similar to the Nile monitor with a couple subtle differences, the Ornate Nile monitors will have a pink tongue compared to the Nile's blue-purplish tongue. Ornate Nile's tend to get bulkier in size when compared to the more slender Nile.

### CARE TIPS:

**Enclosure:** Nile and Ornate Nile monitors are very large lizards therefore have special care concerns and requirements. A juvenile may be kept in a 3 x 2 feet and 2 feet tall enclosure. Ideally the enclosure for an adult should be two or three times the size of your monitor, which is about 10 x 5 feet and 6 feet tall at a minimum. Nile and Ornate Nile monitors are tree climbers but not so high so that they may fall and get hurt.

**Substrate:** Soil is the recommended substrate choice for your monitor.

**Habitat:** Nile monitors can have tree limbs in their housing to allow them to climb and bask. Nile Monitors like to climb, swim, run, and dig. Provide your monitor with places to hide.

**Temperature and Lighting:** The temperatures in the enclosure during the day should be keep around 85° F with a basking area of 120° F. Night temperature should range from 70 - 80° F. Nile and Ornate Nile monitors need 8-12 hours of light per day. Use a heat lamp and UVB-emitting bulbs during the day and a low wattage red bulb for night. Use an under tank heater as your primary heat source. Humidity levels should be around 45% - 50%. Use a heat lamp and UVB-emitting bulbs during the day and a low wattage red bulb for night. Use an under tank heater as your primary heat source.

**Food and Water:** Nile and Ornate Nile monitor lizards have voracious appetites. Crickets, mealworms and roaches for juveniles. Older monitors can be offered cooked eggs and ground turkey as well as the occasional rodent. Dust insect food with calcium supplement and vitamin supplements. As a rule, a growing juvenile's food should be dusted more often than an adult's. Nile monitors love to spend a lot of time in the water so be sure to provide a water dish large enough for the monitor to bathe, soak and swim. Lizards often defecate in their water, so be sure to change the container often. Mist the enclosure once or twice per day care should be taken not to allow the enclosure to become damp.