

OVERVIEW						
<p>The African emperor scorpion (<i>Pandinus imperator</i>) is the most popular pet scorpion due to its large size, placid disposition and weak venom. These scorpions grow as large as seven inches, and groups of similarly sized scorpions may be housed communally providing there are plenty of hiding spaces (or, better still, soil is deep enough to allow for burrowing) and sufficient food. They are huge scorpions that overpower their prey. Their venom is fairly mild and is only used occasionally to help subdue a larger, struggling meal. FUN FACT: Scorpions fluoresce under black (UV) light and the large, black emperors display this phenomenon to amazing effect.</p>						
ENVIRONMENT						
Conditions »	Day Temp	76-82°F	Night Temp	70-78°F	Humidity	70-80%
Heat Source »	<p>Undertank heat mats or low wattage terrarium bulbs providing red or blue “nocturnal” light may be used. Any heat should be provided in manner that creates a gradient from the warmer to cooler end to the enclosure, and should be thermostat-controlled to ensure excessive heat is avoided.</p>					
HOUSING		<p>Small plastic terrariums (e.g., Kritter Keepers) or small aquariums with a tight-fitting locking lid may be used. A 5 ½ to 10 gallon aquarium is favored by most keepers. The substrate should be somewhat moist – damp enough to clump in your fist, but with no excess water dripping out when squeezed. Four to six inches of garden soil, coconut coir or peat moss works well. Mixing in a small percentage (~20%) of sand (smooth beach or natural sand, not abrasive silica sand) may allow for better burrow construction. Scatter a couple of pieces of cork bark or flat rocks throughout the cage to provide additional retreats. Dry oak or magnolia leaves or moss may be used to create attractive ground cover. A water dish is unnecessary and would likely be filled in with soil each night during the scorpion’s activity. Lightly mist the enclosure with lukewarm purified water each evening and feed well and the scorpion will receive sufficient moisture. Emperors may be maintained in groups as long as all scorpions are similar in size, have plenty of space and retreats and food is offered regularly.</p>				
DIET		<p>A variety of insects will be eagerly accepted, including crickets, roaches and kingworms (superworms). Feed small meals (adult cricket) every few days or a larger meal once a week.</p>				
KEEPER SAFETY						
<p>Large scorpions typically have weak venom and use their large claws to overpower their prey. However, people vary in their sensitivity to venom and a sting is best avoided! Also, the large claws can deliver a painful pinch. Scorpions are terrarium pets that are best left alone. Use a stick or wooden spoon to herd the scorpion into a glass or cup when it becomes necessary to move, such as during cage cleaning.</p>						