

Ghost Mantis (*Phyllocrania Paradoxa*) Care Sheet

Housing

These need to be kept in a suitably sized ventilated vivarium with appropriate heat and humidity to help them moult successfully.

A tall 3-4 litre viv is more than enough for an adult mantis and 1-2 litre for smaller nymphs. Silk/plastic foliage and fine mesh net under the lid for them to hang from to moult is best and also easy to keep clean.

As a 'sit and wait' predator smaller housing also makes it easier for them to catch their prey.

Although many suggest these can be housed communally, EVERY mantis species can be cannibalistic including Ghost mantis, particularly when one is moulting and completely defenceless and vulnerable.



Environmental Conditions

These need temps from 20°C to 26°C and humidity 60%-80%

Ensure there is good cross ventilation and heat/humidity is maintained. Also ensure bacteria and mould do not form in the viv as this can cause infections which can kill the mantis.

Feeding

These prefer flying prey, but will sometimes eat mealworms and small locusts.

Never leave gnawing prey in the viv as they can harm the mantis when it is moulting and vulnerable.

Ghost mantis eat fruit flies up to 3rd instar then move on to green bottle flies from Pinkie maggots.

Please see our YouTube video for how to culture and poot flies; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xighuKtK_XU

Most mantis need to drink from a fine mist of water sprayed on the wall of the viv (not on the mantis) or by hand from a shallow bottle cap.

Sexing

Males have 7 abdominal segment and a taller more decorative head piece and longer, thicker antennae.

Females have 5 abdominal segments and a short wide head piece with short, thinner antennae.

Both develop wings once adult and males being more skittish and a lighter build than females will fly more readily.



Female Adult



Male Adult

Moulting

Failing to moult properly can be the biggest killer of praying mantis.

Once they are fat enough they will stop eat for a couple of days in preparation for moulting. They become inactive and stretch and flex to loosen their old skin. Once their skin is loosened they are unable to move so if they lose their grip and fall they are unable to climb back up to hang.

If you find your mantis on the floor floppy or inactive **HANG IT BACK UP IMMEDIATELY!**

Time is of the essence here, with only minutes to hang it back up.

Be careful how you handle them, preferably manoeuvre them with a piece of net fabric or cotton bud and carefully place their feet to grip the net, try not to pick them up between your fingers as they are very fragile during moulting.

For further information and advice please contact us.