

## Giant Spiny Stick Insect

The Giant Spiny Stick Insect, better known as the New Guinea Spiny Stick Insect is a large species of ground dwelling stick insect. They are semitropical. As these insects grow, they go through different stages of skin changes. The adult colour is dark brown or even black and appears shiny and glossy. When younger and in the early stages, they can be different shades of green and brown. Males are distinguished by the large thorn on their hind legs that females do not have. Females are distinguished by the point at the end of their abdomen which is used to deposit eggs. It is possible for males to be aggressive to other males when the enclosure is too small.

This species is not to be confused with the Giant Prickly Stick Insect.



## Glossary

- Reptile** – A cold-blooded vertebrate with scaly skin.
- Amphibian** – A cold-blooded vertebrate that begins life as an aquatic animal and grows into a terrestrial adult with lungs.
- Terrestrial** – A ground dwelling animal.
- Arboreal** – An animal that lives in trees.
- Diurnal** – Awake in the day.
- Nocturnal** – Awake during the night.
- UVB** – Ultraviolet radiation.
- Colubrid** – A family of snakes.
- Hybrid** – Offspring from animals of different species.
- Morph** – Colourations created due to genetics.
- Musk** – Unpleasant odour released when an animal is stressed or feels threatened.

### Live plants are only available on special order

If you require any further information, please ask our pet care advisors who will be very happy to help.

#### Opening Times

Monday – Saturday: 9am – 6pm  
Sunday: 9.30am – 4pm

#### Chessington Garden Centre

Leatherhead Road, Chessington, Surrey, KT9 2NG

**Tel:** 01372 725 638  
**Email:** [info@chessingtongardencentre.co.uk](mailto:info@chessingtongardencentre.co.uk)  
**Web:** [www.chessingtongardencentre.co.uk](http://www.chessingtongardencentre.co.uk)



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# Giant Spiny Stick Insect



## Care & Advice Sheet

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## Size & Housing

Female giant spiny stick insects can reach a length of 11 to 15cm while males will only reach around 11cm. Stick insects need height because when they moult, they hang upside down from their old skin and need the space. The more insects that need to be housed, the larger the enclosure. We recommend the Exo Terra or Komodo terrariums:

30 x 30 x 45cm – Minimum for 1 Adult

45 x 45 x 45cm – Minimum for 2-3 Adults

## Lighting & Temperature

Natural sunlight or artificial light should be provided to create the day and night cycle. The temperature should be maintained between 20 and 25°C as they are semitropical. Achieve this by using a heat mat or a heat bulb with a guard controlled by a thermostat at all times.

## Substrate & Furnishings

For ease of cleaning, paper towels can be used as a substrate that will need to be changed regularly. For a more natural enclosure, substrates that aid humidity such as humus bricks can be used but they must be maintained to prevent the growth of mould. It is possible to use compost substrates that the waste will naturally break down in. The food for these insects makes up most of the furnishings needed but you should provide extra branches and places to hide. For example, small plant pots in the substrate or pieces of bark. Spot pick the enclosure daily and full clean the enclosure at least once a month. If males and females are kept together, you will need to provide a lay box so that the female can deposit her eggs.

**Please Note – These insects may attempt to eat any artificial plants used.**

## Food & Water

These insects solely eat vegetation such as:

- Brambles
- Blackberry leaves
- Raspberry leaves
- Oak leaves
- Ivy leaves
- Firethorn leaves
- Chestnut leaves
- Hazel leaves
- Rose leaves

The enclosure should be misted at least 4 times a week to provide the insects with water. This will also maintain the humidity levels but be careful to not soak the substrate as this will encourage mould growth.

## Handling

When handling, it is best to stay away from the thorn on the back legs of the adult males. When they feel threatened, they will snap their legs together and this can be very painful. When these insects feel disturbed, they will stand on their front legs and lift their hind legs up. Generally they should be comfortable with handling, providing