

Care guide

Fierce Predatory Katydid (*Hexacentrus mundurra*)



Fierce Predatory Katydid are found in grasslands and within forest clearings in north eastern Australia. They typically frequent tall grasses and shrubs where they spend the day well hidden and emerge at night to feed and reproduce. They are a late-season species, adults appearing and calling at the end of summer, and extending through autumn and into early winter.

The common name of this species is very apt as they are aggressive and ruthless predators. They are ambush hunters, usually perching face-down upon foliage and waiting for suitable invertebrate prey to approach them. They will readily attack and subdue insects equal and sometimes exceeding their own body size. Their prey includes other katydids, crickets, grasshoppers, mantids, beetles and spiders. Fierce Predatory Katydid sense their prey with their long antennae, and sometimes even use their antennae to 'herd' small insects towards them. When in range the predator will leap onto the prey with great force, tackling it with the spinose front legs simultaneously inflicting grievous damage to the prey with its powerful mandibles.

Males of this species are very distinctive and have large 'balloon' type wings. These appear to be used to amplify the loud 'zzzzzt' call produced by the males in order to attract females.

Care guide

Food: Live insects (crickets, cockroaches, grasshoppers). Insects such as mealworms may be fed via forceps. Minibeast Wildlife's [Predatory Katydid Food](#) is also suitable.

Water: Mist spray the enclosure once a day. This will keep the enclosure damp and the humidity high. The katydids will drink from the moisture on the foliage and branches.

Enclosure: An enclosure ideally needs to be around 30cm H x 30cm W x 30cm D to adequately house 1 or 2 adults. Live plants may be used, however artificial plants are also suitable and require little maintenance. Sticks and branches can be placed within the enclosure as they are required for the insects to hang from whilst moulting. These katydids are highly cannibalistic, so should only be kept together for breeding purposes.

Temperature: This species will do best at 24° – 28°C, but will tolerate 16 – 24°C and have a slower growth rate.

Life span: Up to one year.

Handling: Direct handling is not recommended as they are relatively lightly built and may be injured in attempt to restrain them. These katydids have powerful mandibles and can inflict a painful bite if mishandled. They are unpredictable and may leap away without warning.

Reproduction: Pairing should take place after both mature individuals have been consistently well fed. Mating will take place with mature specimens with no specialised conditions required. If mating has been observed (or the female is seen carrying a spermatophore) the pair should be separated. Females require an oviposition site; either an enclosure substrate to the depth of 50mm or a laying tub at the same depth. Coco-peat is ideal for this purpose. Eggs usually hatch after several months' incubation; however incubation periods are highly dependant on the temperature at which they are incubated. Periods of cooling can result in incubation times in excess of 6 months.

Common issues: Care should be taken when opening the enclosure as this species is a powerful jumper and can rapidly escape.

NOTE: These animals are captive bred, and should not be released into the wild.

For more information contact Minibeast Wildlife at info@minibeastwildlife.com.au