



CARE GUIDE



TAILLESS WHIP SCORPION

Charinus pescotti



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PROFILE

Tailless whip scorpions (Amblypygids) are nocturnal predatory arachnids that share some traits with spiders and scorpions but belong to their own separate order; the Amblypygi. Their resemblance to both spiders and scorpions has resulted in them being also referred to as Whip Spiders and Tailless Whip Scorpions. Australia has several species, all found in the northern regions of the country. On a world scale, the Australian species are quite small, measuring around 10mm in adult body length.

Tailless whip scorpions have eight legs, however the first pair are highly specialised and known as antenniform legs and used in much the same way as insects use their antennae. These sensory legs are very thin and elongated to several times the length of the body. Apart from having a mere sensory role, these legs can actually assist in 'herding' prey towards the Amblypygid.

Unlike their well-known cousins spiders and scorpions, Tailless whip scorpions are non-venomous. They are stealthy ambush hunters, moving slowly and deliberately and launching rapidly at their prey at close range. Prey is simply grabbed by their powerful spiny pedipalps and crushed. The chelicerae (mouth-parts) work in much the same way as that of scorpions; prey is slowly crushed and dismembered while the bodily juices are ingested.

Females produce eggs which are secured to the underside of their abdomen in a protective sac for the duration of incubation. Incubation can take three to four months during which time the mother usually does not feed. After hatching, the young remain clinging to their mother's abdomen for at least two weeks, usually longer before dispersing to take on life as miniature predators.

FOOD

We recommend **fresh dead insects** as food such as small dead crickets (or parts of larger ones) once or twice weekly. If using live food it should be around $\frac{1}{4}$ the body size of the Tailless whip scorpion. Pin-head crickets are excellent food for young specimens. Vinegar flies, juvenile slaters and other small harmless invertebrates may also be used. As your Tailless whip scorpion grows the size of prey may be increased.

WATER

Mist spray as the enclosure as required to maintain a moist humid environment.

ENCLOSURE

For adults, enclosures should have a floor space of around 15cm x 15cm, however smaller enclosures are better for juveniles. The enclosure should be large enough to maintain a basic moisture gradient and provide a climbable hide. A piece of lightweight foam (provided with Minibeast Wildlife's Compact Kit) is ideal and can be leant on a 45° angle to create a perfect surface for your Tailless whip scorpion to live on. These animals are able to climb relatively smooth surfaces so a secure ventilated lid is required.

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

Remove any uneaten food or food waste that appears. If any mould or fungi starts to grow in the enclosure, remove as needed. A complete substrate change may be required if the enclosure is overgrown with fungi. Otherwise, a substrate change is only necessary once a year at most.

SUBSTRATE

Moist (not sodden) coco-peat is an ideal substrate, to a minimum depth of 30mm. This moist substrate will provide the humidity within the enclosure. Additional objects (bark, rocks etc) may be added to provide shelter, although extreme care must be taken when using any objects that could potentially crush the Tailless whip scorpion.

HANDLING

When disturbed these animals move in short fast bursts and usually move sideways. Due to their small size and movement handling is not recommended due to the risk of escape or injury. To capture or move an Tailless whip scorpion, use a container with a flat (square) edge that can be pressed securely against the surface the animal is sitting upon. Gently guide the Tailless whip scorpion into the container. Flat objects such as foam hides, dry leaves or bark are often good 'tools' to move Amblypygids onto in order to move them from one enclosure to another.

TEMPERATURE

The safe temperature range for this species is 18 – 26°C, but will tolerate cooler conditions for limited periods. Cooler temperatures will result in a slower growth rate. Beware of overheating.

COMMON ISSUES

These animals are very good at squeezing into very small crevices and hiding. Choose hides and other enclosure furniture with this in mind. Also avoid unstable heavy objects such as rocks that may injure or kill your Tailless whip scorpion when the enclosure is moved.



To prevent dehydration, these animals require relatively high humidity (60-80%). This can be maintained by keeping the substrate moist.



3-5 years life span



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

For more information contact us at
info@minibeastwildlife.com.au
0434 998 263