

BLUE TREE MONITOR

updated March 2017



Range	Indonesian island of Batanta
Habitat	Rain forest
Diet (wild)	Small mammals, insects, invertebrates and eggs
Diet (captivity)	Crickets and worms
Description	Length: 12–15 inches; tail: additional 24–30 inches. Small, slender lizard with long legs and a prehensile tail that is twice the length of the body. Overall coloring is gray to black with cobalt blue spots over the head, body and tail with a grayish blue underside. Males are larger than females.
Lifespan	Wild: estimated at 10 years. Captivity: over 10 years
Reproduction	The female lays 1–5 clutches each year, probably dependent on her food intake. She lays her eggs approximately one month after the first mating. In captive settings, courtship has been initiated by the female. When she is receptive to mating, she approaches the male and the two spend time basking on the same perch over a period of days. Female creates a nest of moss, dirt, coconut fiber, and leaf matter.
Behavior	Relatively little is known about the natural ecology and behavior of blue tree monitors. From the research completed so far, this species is diurnal and seems to be almost completely arboreal. Their sharp claws give them a secure hold on almost any rough surface and they can climb with considerable ease. Blue tree monitors employ their prehensile tail as a grasping tool. Monitors coil their tails on a plane horizontal to their bodies and rapidly uncoil the appendage for use as a defensive whip.
Our animals	1 female. Arrived at PPZ in 2015
Cool stuff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Like most monitor lizards, blue tree monitors are very nervous species and avoid potential predators by fleeing up trees and keeping the tree trunk between themselves and intruders, much like squirrels.

Phylum
ChordataClass
ReptiliaOrder
SquamataFamily
VaranidaeGenus
Varanusspecies
V. macraei