Protecting exotic species of Praying Mantis Idolomantis Diabolica - The Devil's Flower Mantis

Abstract

The Idolomantis Diabolica, otherwise known as the Devil's Flower Mantis is one of the largest species of praying mantis in the world and is thought to possibly be the largest that mimics flowers. Known for its size, colours and threat display, the Idolomantis is an impressive and desired insect for most mantis lovers

Threats imposed on the Idolomantis Diabolica

Found among wildflowers in Eastern Africa, the Idolomantis is very tolerant of hot and dry conditions,
meaning breeders face many challenges in rearing these exotic pets.

The type of enclosure required to house an Idolomantis presents the first obstacle. The Idolomantis have hooked feet, therefore, mesh-like enclosures are required to help them grip onto and hang from, which they do when moulting. The problem with having a mesh enclosure is that it's very hard to maintain a good level of humidity.

Throughout an Idolomantis Diaboloca's life, it will moult to shed its skin anywhere between seven and nine times. In order to shed, there must be high humidity levels so that the Idolomantis can moult easily and slip out of its exoskeleton (old skin). When the humidity is low, the mantis can sometimes
become stuck in its old skin (mismolt), which can potentially lead to limb loss. One solution in order to retain humidity is to place plastic bin bags around the enclosure. These can then be sprayed with water to keep the humidity high.

Temperatures are also an important factor in an Idolomantis enclosure. It is recommended that temperatures stay as high as 30°C during the day, as temperatures lower than this can cause slower growth and mismolt. A mismolt can be caused by a number of things including too much/not enough heat, or too much/not enough humidity.

Temperature and humidity monitoring solutions

To make sure that the temperature and humidity remain at optimal levels throughout the day and night, an EasyLog EL-SIE-2 temperature and relative humidity digital data logger can be installed. Designed to measure temperature and humidity in a large range of applications the EL-SIE-2 can be configured to take the temperature and humidity readings 24/7. The EL-SIE-2 can alert users via the onboard light's and sounder, giving users enough time to attend and alter the conditions inside the enclosure. With all the alarms set, users can leave Idolomantis without having to manually check the
parameters in the enclosures.