

Mexican Redknee Tarantula

(Brachypelma smithi)

by Jon Fouskaris

The Mexican Redknee Tarantula is probably the most popular of all pet tarantulas. It has been collected since the 1970's and 1980's. It was originally discovered by a collector named H.H. Smith in 1888. The Mexican Redknee Tarantula was one of the first species to enter the hobby and has been used as scary props in many films. This tarantula has been in films such as "Raiders of the Lost Ark", a couple James Bond series, and many others. The Mexican Redknee Tarantula is known to be one of the longest living tarantula species, with females living up to 30 years, which is an advantage over many other tarantula species. Whether you're a beginner, or an advanced hobbyist, you can't go wrong with a Mexican Redknee Tarantula. Due to this creature's gentle nature, colourful appearance, large body size, and long life, it is easy to see why the Mexican Redknee Tarantula is such a desired animal in the hobby.

Range:

Pacific side of Mexico, in scrubland and deserts.

Type:

Terrestrial.

Diet:

Spiderlings will eat pinhead crickets, and other small insects. Adults eat crickets, other large insects, small lizards, pinkie mice, and an occasional fuzzy mouse.

Full Grown Size:

5 to 5.5 inches.

Growth:

Slow speed.

Temperature:

75 to 90° F.

Humidity:

75 to 80%. All tarantulas that have at least a 3" leg span may drink from a shallow, wide water dish.

Temperament:

Docile and calm.

Housing:

Spiderlings can live in a clear plastic deli-container with air holes. Adults can live in a 5 to 10-gallon tank. Floor space is more important than height.

Substrate:

2 to 3 inches of peat moss, or potting soil.

Decor:

No decorations are really needed, but you can add a log, or cork bark.

Other Names:

Mexican Orange Knee Tarantula, Mexican Red Kneed Tarantula, and Mexican Orange Kneed Tarantula.

**Please note that ALL tarantulas have a certain amount of venom. Although most people are not affected by this species, some people may be allergic to the venom, or just more sensitive, making it a dangerous situation. This is one of the reasons that people should not handle this tarantula. Also, New World species of tarantulas like this one can flick urticating hairs off of their abdomens, which can also cause a reaction, depending on the person. Affects of this tarantulas' natural defences may vary between people. All tarantulas should be considered dangerous, so be careful, because you don't want to find out if you are allergic or more sensitive the HARD WAY!*