

CAL ZOO'S REFERENCE SHEET

ROSE HAIR TARANTULAS

Latin name	Grammostola cala	Maximum length	3 - 4 inches standard leg span
Native to	Chile	Approximate life span	5 years

GENERAL INFORMATION

Rose Hair Tarantulas are by far one of the most popular pet spiders, due to its attractive color, calm temperament and inexpensive price compared to other tarantulas. Do not house more than one Rose Hair Tarantula in the same enclosure. Not only can tarantulas be aggressive towards humans, they are extremely aggressive towards each other. You will end up with one or no tarantulas if you mix them! Tarantulas carry their skeletons on the outside. Do not let tarantulas fall for more than a couple of inches since this can split the exoskeleton open if dropped. If your tarantula loses a leg, it will eventually grow a new one in its place with successive molts.

ENCLOSURE

Tarantulas for the most part are inactive. Therefore small enclosures are ideal. 10 gallon aquariums are more than one needs to adequately set up Rose Hairs. Decorate with large, sturdy hiding places, Zoo Med reptile vines, cork bark hollows, dead leaves and climbing branches.

SUBSTRATE

Slightly damp potting soil (peat moss), vermiculite, Zoo Med REPTI-BARK™ or sphagnum moss are all fine choices. Each will hold moisture well. Keep only slightly damp. Make sure you do not have any standing water on top of the substrate (other than the water dish) because tarantulas' legs are very susceptible to deterioration if submerged in water for too long.

TEMPERATURE & HUMIDITY

Rose Hairs will live comfortably with the temperature set within a couple of degrees above or below 80°F. They like a humid environment so the moisture from the dampened substrate will be sufficient to humidify the enclosure. Never allow the humidity levels to rise so high that condensation forms on the glass. Slight misting of the substrate once a day should keep the humidity level correct at about 70%. Zoo Med has a great PRECISION ANALOG HUMIDITY GAUGE available.

HEATING

Use a Zoo Med REPTITHERM® UNDER TANK HEATER (U.T.H.) on one end of the tank. Do not turn it off. Leave it on 24 hours a day. UTH's take a few hours to reach their optimal temperature. For easy heat control, use a Zoo Med REPTI-TEMP™ RHEOSTAT in conjunction with the U.T.H. Always use at least one thermometer in your enclosure. A Zoo Med DELUXE ANALOG MIN/MAX THERMOMETER works great to show the high and low temperatures in a 24 hour period.

LIGHTING

A Zoo Med 2.0 fluorescent light is sufficient. High UVB lighting is not essential. All reptiles, amphibians and tarantulas need a photo period (light cycle). A plug in timer (for your white lights only, do not use a timer for your heating devices) works well to develop a regular photo period of 8 - 10 hours of light, 14 - 16 hours of dark. For nighttime viewing, use of a low wattage red bulb is ideal.

FOOD & WATER

Crickets are the main diet for most tarantulas. Always feed your crickets assorted fruits and vegetables or a commercially prepared cricket diet 12-24 hours before feeding the crickets to your tarantulas. Many adult tarantulas will occasionally take a pinkie mouse. Still other large tarantulas will take adult mice. These larger meals will last a tarantula far longer than crickets. A small hopper mouse will keep an adult Rose Hair satisfied for a few weeks. It is recommended to feed pre-killed mice to adult tarantulas. If the tarantula gets an unsecured bite, the rodent will have an opportunity to inflict a potentially fatal bite to the tarantula. A water bowl with the approximate size of the tarantula's abdomen filled with cotton or filter wool wadding is sufficient. The spider will climb on top of the dish and suck the water up through its labium (mouth) at the base of the fangs. Make sure the water never dries out and the water bowl contents are always clean.

NOTES

Tarantulas can inflict painful bites. We do not recommend they be handled due to systemic effects in humans. Rose Hair tarantulas will readily flick abdominal hairs. These hairs can irritate your skin, eyes and nose. It is advised that you wear gloves and eye protection when cleaning out their enclosures. Always wash your hands before and immediately after handling reptiles and amphibians. Never leave live food long term with reptiles & amphibians. They can inflict severe harm, even kill your pet. If your animals take some time to eat or you feed them at night, leave a slice of potato, carrot or dry dog food for the live food items to eat. Your local pet shop is an ideal source for reptile and amphibian related books and supplies. Please make sure you read and become familiar with any instructions provided with reptile support products you may purchase. For further information on reptiles and amphibians we recommend you read *REPTILES MAGAZINE* and *THE VIVARIUM*. California Zoological Supply hopes you have enjoyed reading this reference sheet on Rose Hair Tarantulas. We hope that our guidelines will assist you with the care or possible purchase of your new pet.

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