

5 Australian cockroaches in captivity

by Deanna Henderson

Cockroaches live in almost every terrestrial habitat on the planet, from rainforests and deserts, to alpine areas and everything in between. With such diversity, it is clear that a single care regime is not going to be suitable for all species. Varying approaches must be implemented across different species to ensure success.

The key elements for successful care are appropriate housing, diet and environmental conditions (inclusive of light, temperature and humidity). A good starting point for keeping cockroaches in captivity is to analyse their wild habitat and provide the same basic elements to which they are adapted. Whether keeping

cockroaches for research or just because they are fascinating animals, this chapter explains how to care for cockroaches in the medium- to long-term.

Housing

Many cockroach species have the ability to climb vertical surfaces, so choosing an enclosure with a lid is important. This not only keeps the cockroaches in, but also keeps predators such as spiders out. Plastic terrariums, glass tanks and plastic tubs all make suitable enclosures for cockroaches, but they must also be ventilated. Commercially available enclosures have ventilation catered for, but if customising a



Acrylic terrariums or plastic tubs with ventilated lids make suitable enclosures for many cockroaches.