

Sunburst wolf spider (Tasmanicosa or Venator sp.) Care guide



“Sunburst” wolf spiders are an unidentified species of wolf spider (Lycosidae) found in short burrows in SA’s northern mallee. They are around 13mm in body length and display a vibrant reddish-brown as the main colour, with many other colours and patterns mixed through. We suspect this species is a colour form of *Tasmanicosa ramosa* as the ventral (underside) pattern is an exact match, but we haven’t got a specimen examined yet.

Wolf spiders are great feeders and often end up looking distended in the body. One of our Venatrix penola ate 7 crickets at once, and then another 2 the next day!

Wolf spiders are very fast and skittish and unlikely to bite, however we do not recommend handling Lycosids as they stress easily and have a painful bite. When hungry, sunbursts will dart in and out of their burrow trying to catch the crickets walking past, it can be quite entertaining to watch them miss the crickets passing by their burrow.

Water:

Being a semi-arid species, these wolf spiders get most if not all the moisture they need from their prey, but having a little bit of humidity inside the enclosure will help the soil and help the spider moult if juvenile.

Food:

These spiders should be fed once or twice a week, a cricket around $\frac{1}{2}$ the body length will be ideal. You can drop the cricket directly into the burrow or simply leave it in the enclosure.

Enclosure:

An ideal enclosure will be taller than it is wide, as sunburst's must burrow to live a happy life. Substrate at around 10-15cm will be fine, with a clay-cocopeat mix being ideal. A piece of moss or some leaf litter may be included to help hold moisture and create pockets of moisture.

Humidity

40-70%

Temperature

This species does best at 17-25 degrees (c)