



Mexican Fireleg Tarantula Care Guide

Brachypelma boehmei — Schmidt & Klaas, 1993

Experience	Lifespan	Adult Legspan	Origin
Beginner–Intermediate	20–30 years (females)	5–6.5 in DLS	Pacific Mexico

Natural History

Brachypelma boehmei — the Mexican Fireleg, or Mexican Flame Knee — is native to the dry Pacific-coast scrublands of Guerrero in south-western Mexico. It is a ground-dwelling species that shelters in burrows and under rocks across a hot, seasonally arid landscape.

That dry origin shapes its captive care: mostly dry substrate, a full water dish, and good ventilation. The genus *Brachypelma* is protected under international (CITES) trade rules due to historical wild collection, so captive-bred stock is the only responsible source — and fortunately it breeds readily in the hobby.

The Fireleg is among the most striking New World terrestrials, with flame-orange leg segments shading to black, a cream-edged carapace, and a dense covering of red-gold setae. It is hardy and undemanding, but quick to flick its notably irritating urticating hairs — a habit that nudges it from pure beginner toward beginner-intermediate.

Housing

The Mexican Fireleg is terrestrial and a moderate burrower. Give it floor space and a good depth of substrate, and keep the enclosure low — a heavy-bodied spider is easily injured by a fall.

Life Stage	Enclosure	Notes
Spiderling (under 1")	Deli cup / small vented container	Mostly dry substrate, deep enough to burrow, small water source
Juvenile (1–3")	16 oz – 1 gal enclosure	Deep substrate, cork hide, shallow water dish
Sub-adult / Adult (3"+)	5–10 gal or equivalent	3–5 in of substrate, cork hide, water dish, good airflow

Provide 3–5 inches of mostly dry substrate — coconut fibre, peat, or topsoil — a cork bark hide, and a permanent water dish. Keep the enclosure wider than it is tall and ensure good cross-ventilation.

Temperature & Humidity

Warm and mostly dry reflects the Guerrero scrubland. No supplemental heating is needed in most homes.

Parameter	Target	Notes
Temperature	75–85°F (24–29°C)	Warm; avoid sustained drops below 65°F
Ambient Humidity	55–65% RH	Mostly dry with a lightly dampened corner
Substrate	Mostly dry	Dampen one corner or overflow the water dish occasionally
Water	Permanent water dish	Keep filled at all times

MOST COMMON MISTAKE

Keeping the enclosure too damp. The Fireleg is a dry-scrubland species — a stuffy, wet enclosure invites mould and mites. Keep it mostly dry with a full water dish and good airflow.

Feeding

The Mexican Fireleg is a confident, reliable feeder with a healthy appetite, rarely fasting for long outside of pre-moult.

Prey: Gut-loaded crickets, Dubia roaches, and the occasional mealworm. Keep prey no larger than the spider's abdomen.

Frequency: Juveniles every 3–5 days, adults every 7–10 days. Aim for a plump but not over-stretched abdomen.

Remove uneaten prey within 24 hours, especially during pre-moult when the spider is vulnerable.

Moulting

Growth is moderate, slowing to roughly one moult a year in mature adults. Each moult renews the brilliant orange-and-black contrast that makes this species so prized.

Pre-moult signs: A darkened abdomen, food refusal, lethargy, and sometimes a web mat over the substrate. Remove all live prey at the first signs.

Post-moult: Leave the spider undisturbed and wait 7–14 days before feeding so the new exoskeleton and fangs harden fully. Keep the water dish topped up throughout.

Handling

The Mexican Fireleg is generally calm but skittish, and it is one of the most enthusiastic hair-kickers in the hobby. Many keepers choose not to handle it for that reason; if you do, it is always at your own risk and never entirely without it.

Urticating hairs are present (Type III) and rank among the most irritating of any tarantula — the spider readily flicks a cloud of them from its abdomen when disturbed, and they can cause significant skin and eye irritation. Keep sessions calm and brief, stay low over a soft surface, wash your hands afterward, and never handle over a hard floor, as a fall can rupture the abdomen and be fatal.

This guide was compiled using commonly accepted husbandry practices from experienced keepers and industry-standard tarantula care resources.

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