



Antilles Pinktoe Tarantula Care Guide

Caribena versicolor — Walckenaer, 1837

Experience	Lifespan	Adult Legspan	Origin
Intermediate	Up to 12 years (females)	5–6 in DLS	Lesser Antilles

Natural History

Caribena versicolor — the Antilles or Martinique Pinktoe — is an arboreal species native to the islands of the Lesser Antilles, chiefly Martinique and Guadeloupe. It lives high in trees and tall vegetation, anchoring silken tube-webs in the canopy where warm, humid air is kept fresh by constant breeze.

That airy, high-canopy origin is the single most important fact in its care: it needs high humidity **combined with strong ventilation**. Stagnant, damp air is deadly to this species, which makes it a touch more demanding than a beginner terrestrial — but the reward is one of the most beautiful tarantulas in the world.

Spiderlings emerge an electric blue, then shift through successive moults to the adult's green carapace, red-and-purple abdomen, and pink-tipped feet. Calm by nature but fast and prone to leaping, the Antilles Pinktoe is the classic introduction to arboreal keeping for those ready to manage its ventilation needs.

Housing

This is an arboreal species, so height matters more than floor space. Use a tall enclosure with cross-ventilation (vents on opposite sides or front and top) and tall anchor points for webbing. A front- or side-opening enclosure is ideal, as reaching down from above startles the spider and tears its web.

Life Stage	Enclosure	Notes
Spiderling (under 1")	Tall vented vial / small arboreal cup	Vertical cork, anchor points, light moisture, heavy ventilation
Juvenile (1–3")	Tall acrylic or 2–4 gal vertical	Cork tube, fake foliage, cross-ventilation
Sub-adult / Adult (3"+)	12×12×18 in (or taller) vertical	Vertical cork bark, plants, water dish, strong cross-ventilation

Provide a vertical cork bark slab or tube against one wall, plus fake plants, so the spider can build its tube-web off the ground. A shallow layer of substrate (2–3 in) holds light moisture and cushions any fall, but this species lives up top, not in the dirt.

Temperature & Humidity

Warm, humid, and well-ventilated mirrors the island canopy. Achieving humidity *without* stagnant air is the whole game with this species.

Parameter	Target	Notes
Temperature	75–82°F (24–28°C)	Stable warmth; avoid sustained drops below 70°F
Ambient Humidity	70–80% RH	High — but always paired with strong cross-ventilation
Moisture	Light misting	Mist part of the web/wall every 1–2 days; let it dry between
Water	Small water dish	Provide a dish; the spider also drinks droplets off misting

MOST COMMON MISTAKE

Sealing the enclosure to trap humidity. *Caribena versicolor* is notorious for dying in stuffy, stagnant setups. The correct approach is high airflow plus regular light misting — never a closed, swampy box.

Feeding

Pinktoes are active, visual hunters that ambush prey from their web. They are enthusiastic feeders and often snatch prey mid-air.

Prey: Gut-loaded crickets and flying insects, plus small Dubia roaches. Keep prey no larger than the spider's abdomen. Flying prey suits this aerial hunter well.

Frequency: Spiderlings twice a week, juveniles every 5–7 days, adults every 7–10 days. Arboreals are more prone to dehydration than terrestrials, so keep moisture and water consistent.

Remove uneaten prey within 24 hours so it cannot disturb the spider in its web retreat.

Moulting

Pinktoes typically moult inside their tube-web, often on their backs or sides. Each moult deepens the green-and-red adult colouration. Growth is moderate, slowing to once or twice a year in adults.

Pre-moult signs: A darkened abdomen, food refusal, and increased time sealed in the web. Remove all live prey at the first signs.

Post-moult: Leave the spider completely undisturbed and wait 7–14 days before feeding so the new exoskeleton and fangs harden. Keep humidity steady throughout — fresh moults are vulnerable to drying out.

Handling

The Antilles Pinktoe is docile and rarely defensive, but it is extremely fast and known for sudden leaps. A startled pinktoe can launch off a hand without warning, and a fall from height is dangerous for an arboreal spider. For these reasons handling is generally discouraged, and is always at the keeper's own risk.

This species has weak urticating hairs (Type II) and may also flick faecal matter as a defensive bluff rather than stand its ground. Keep any unavoidable contact — such as rehousing — low, calm, and over a soft surface, and work with the enclosure rather than the spider whenever possible.

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

ExoKeeper Care Library · by Grim Serpents · exokeeper.app