GREEN BOTTLE BLUE TARANTULA

Chromatopelma cyaneopubescens

COMPLETE KEEPER'S CARE GUIDE

NEW WORLD	TERRESTRIAL / SEMI-ARBOREAL	BEGINNER FRIENDLY	PROLIFIC WEBBER

Grim Arachnids · May 2026

QUICK FACTS

ATTRIBUTE	DETAIL
Scientific name	Chromatopelma cyaneopubescens
Family	Theraphosidae
Origin	Paraguaná Peninsula, Falcón State, Venezuela
Habitat type	Arid xeric scrubland / thorn-cactus forest; below 200 m elevation

ATTRIBUTE	DETAIL
Adult legspan	5–6 in (12–15 cm); females larger than males
Lifespan — female	12–14 years
Lifespan — male	3–4 years; typically dies within months post-maturity
Experience level	Beginner to intermediate
Temperament	Skittish but not aggressive; flees before threatening
Venom	Mild (New World); not medically significant in healthy adults
Urticating hairs	Type IV — present on abdomen; will kick when disturbed
Communal keeping	Not recommended

NATURAL HISTORY

Chromatopelma cyaneopubescens — the Green Bottle Blue, or GBB — holds a well-earned reputation as the hobby's most spectacular display tarantula. Native exclusively to the Paraguaná Peninsula in Venezuela's Falcón State, it occupies a narrow coastal strip that juts into the Caribbean Sea. The region is classified as xeric scrubland: sparse, sun-baked terrain of thorn trees, columnar cacti, and low brush where rainfall is minimal and the climate is hot and dry year-round. This stands in direct contrast to the humid tropics many keepers expect from a Venezuelan species, and is the single most important fact governing its captive care.

In the field, GBBs are opportunistic architects. They establish silk retreats at the base of thorn trees, tucked beneath flat rocks, or within the cracked interiors of dried cacti — wherever reliable prey movement dictates a good hunting post. The entrance to a retreat is almost always extended outward as a broad hammock or funnel of webbing, serving as both a prey-detection tripwire and a buffer against the abrasive desert environment. Individuals have been observed at various heights in low trees as well as at ground level, which explains why captive specimens behave as both terrestrial and semi-arboreal depending on available anchor points. Venezuelan researchers have documented that overgrazing is degrading Paraguaná scrubland, making responsible captive breeding an active conservation consideration.

The genus *Chromatopelma* is monotypic — the GBB is its only member. Spiderlings bear no resemblance to adults: they emerge in a banded orange-and-black palette with metallic turquoise femurs. Through successive molts this transforms into the adult's signature bottle-green carapace, electric blue legs, and dense orange abdomen. Freshly moulted individuals display the most saturated colouration, which fades slightly before the next moult cycle.

HOUSING

Enclosure Type and Size

GBBs are terrestrial-first but will readily web upward given anchor points, so a versatile enclosure with both floor space and moderate height works best. Good ventilation is non-negotiable — cross-flow venting (front slits + mesh top) is ideal. Avoid enclosures with poor airflow; stale, humid air is one of the fastest ways to lose a GBB.

LIFE STAGE	MINIMUM ENCLOSURE
Sling (under 1 in)	Small deli cup or 3 in cube with ventilation holes
Juvenile (1–3 in)	4–6 in cube or equivalent; floor space priority
Sub-adult / Adult	12 × 12 × 12 in (30 × 30 × 30 cm) or larger

Tip: Replace mesh lids with drilled acrylic to prevent claws snagging. More ventilation holes are always better.

Substrate

Use dry coconut coir, organic cactus/potting mix, or a coir/play-sand blend (3:1). A depth of 2–4 in is sufficient for adults; GBBs are not dedicated burrowers and rarely dig more than a shallow scrape. Keep the substrate dry at the surface — moisture trapped in a poorly ventilated enclosure is lethal.

Sling note: A single moist corner (a few drops from an eyedropper) once a week provides hydration without raising overall humidity. Never mist the enclosure.

Hides and Decor

Provide one or two pieces of cork bark — a flat slab and a half-round — partially buried at different angles to create retreat options and web anchor points. Cork branches, cholla wood, or driftwood positioned at angles will encourage the GBB's impressive webbing. Leaf litter adds enrichment. Avoid live plants that need regular watering, as moisture management is critical.

Temperature

PARAMETER	RANGE	NOTES
Ambient day	75–85°F (24–29°C)	Room temperature usually sufficient
Ambient night	70–75°F (21–24°C)	Brief dips to 65°F tolerated short-term
Gradient	Warm + cool zone	Allow thermoregulation

■ Do NOT use under-tank heat mats or heat lamps. If supplemental heat is needed, warm the whole room or use a side-mounted heat panel with a thermostat.

Humidity

This is the most commonly misunderstood aspect of GBB care. Because the species originates in Venezuela, many keepers assume high humidity is required. The opposite is true: the Paraguaná Peninsula is one of the driest regions in South America.

PARAMETER	TARGET	HOW TO ACHIEVE
Ambient RH	50–60%	Dry substrate + good ventilation; no misting

PARAMETER	TARGET	HOW TO ACHIEVE
Sling corner	Slightly moist	3–5 drops water in one corner weekly
Water dish (juv./adult)	Small, always full	Overflow occasionally for trace moisture

FEEDING

Prey and Sizing

GBBs are voracious, enthusiastic hunters with one of the strongest prey responses in the hobby. In the wild their diet is predominantly crickets, grasshoppers, beetles, and cockroaches. In captivity, gut-loaded dubia roaches and crickets are the staple. Superworms and mealworms are acceptable occasional variety items.

Prey sizing rule: no larger than the width of the tarantula's abdomen.

Remove any uneaten prey within 24 hours to prevent stress and mould.

Feeding Frequency by Life Stage

LIFE STAGE	PREY SIZE	FREQUENCY
Sling	Pinhead crickets / fruit flies	Every 3–4 days
Juvenile	Small crickets / small dubia	Twice a week
Sub-adult	Medium crickets / medium dubia	Once a week
Adult	Large crickets / large dubia	Every 7–14 days

Adjust based on abdomen size. A plump abdomen = well-fed; flat or wrinkled = increase frequency. Food refusal lasting more than a week usually signals pre-molt.

GBBs consistently refuse food in pre-molt — this is normal and can last weeks or months in adults. Do not force-feed. Continue offering fresh water throughout.

WATER

Juveniles and adults should always have a small, shallow water dish. A bottle cap works for juveniles; a 1–2 in ceramic or plastic dish for adults. Refill daily and allow it to overflow occasionally to release a trace of humidity into the enclosure. For slings too small for a dish, dribble a few drops of water onto the webbing at night — the spider will drink from it.

HANDLING

Handling this species is not recommended. GBBs are fast-moving and easily startled — a spooked specimen can bolt in under a second, and a fall from any meaningful height risks fatal abdominal rupture. As a New World tarantula, the GBB possesses Type IV urticating setae on its abdomen. These barbed hairs are kicked toward

threats with a rapid leg-raking motion and cause intense dermal irritation. If transferred to the eyes or nasal passages they can cause serious, persistent discomfort. Always wash hands thoroughly after any contact with the spider or its enclosure.

In the event of a defensive bite, clean the wound with soap and water and apply a cold pack to reduce localised swelling. GBB venom is not considered medically significant in healthy adults, but individual responses vary and allergic reactions are possible. Seek professional medical evaluation if symptoms extend beyond the bite site, or if discomfort persists or worsens.

■ **GBBs are display animals. Appreciate them through the glass — the view is spectacular enough.**

MOULTING

Pre-Molt Signs

- Food refusal lasting days to weeks — the most reliable indicator
- Abdomen darkens as the new skin shows through the setae
- Increased webbing — spider seals or thickens its retreat
- Lethargy and reduced reaction to stimuli

During the Molt

The spider will roll onto its back and begin extricating itself from the old exoskeleton. This process takes a few minutes for slings or several hours for large adults. Do not disturb the enclosure or attempt to assist unless a stuck-molt emergency is confirmed (limbs visibly trapped for more than 24 hours). Remove any live prey from the enclosure immediately.

Post-Molt Care

LIFE STAGE	WAIT BEFORE FEEDING	CONFIRMATION
Sling	5–10 days	Fangs fully black; no soft white areas visible
Juvenile	7–10 days	Exoskeleton firm to visual inspection
Adult	7–14 days	Fangs solid black; abdomen has refilled

Fresh molts display the most vivid, saturated colouration — one of the most rewarding sights in the hobby. Offer water as soon as the spider is ambulatory. Remove the old exoskeleton (exuvia) once the spider has moved away; it can be kept and used for sexing.

HEALTH AND COMMON ISSUES

ISSUE	SIGNS	RESPONSE
Dehydration	Shrivelled abdomen, lethargy, refusal to eat	Ensure water dish is full; dribble water on webbing at night

ISSUE	SIGNS	RESPONSE
Excess humidity	Mould in enclosure, sluggishness, failed molt	Improve ventilation; let substrate dry fully
Stuck molt (dysecdysis)	Limbs trapped in old skin >24 hrs	Slightly raise humidity; consult a molt-assist guide if >48 hrs
Mites / parasites	Tiny moving dots on spider or substrate	Remove spider; clean enclosure; replace all substrate
Fall injuries	Ruptured abdomen after a drop	Keep enclosure low; limit high climbing points

GBBs kept in correct dry, well-ventilated conditions rarely encounter health problems. The most common keeper mistake is over-humidifying based on assumptions about Venezuela's tropical climate. The Paraguaná Peninsula is anything but tropical.

CAPTIVE BREEDING

GBBs are considered relatively straightforward to breed and produce large egg sacs. They are a high-demand species and captive breeding reduces pressure on wild populations.

STAGE	DETAILS
Male maturity	2–3 years; tibial hooks and enlarged pedipalps appear at ultimate molt
Female maturity	4–6 years; must be well-fed and recently moulted before introduction
Introduction	Introduce male at night; he will drum on the webbing to signal. Observe closely — females can be cannibal
Post-pairing	Remove male immediately after a confirmed insertion; he may be eaten
Egg sac timeline	Female may fast for weeks then seal her burrow; sac typically laid 4–8 weeks post-pairing
Sac to 2nd instar	~6–8 weeks; viable clutches commonly yield 80–200+ slings
Sling care	Dry, ventilated enclosure with a slightly moist corner; feed pinhead crickets every 3–4 days
Humidity at breeding	Slightly lower than typical — reduces mould risk inside the sac

SOURCES

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