
Chilean Rose Tarantula

Grammostola rosea

Class: *Arachnida*

Order: *Araneae*

Family: *Theraphosidae*

Characteristics: Body -1.5 in or longer; leg span up to 5.75 in. Males are longer and slimmer than females with smaller abdomens; females larger and heavier. Neither spins webs strong enough to hold their own weight. Good vision. Burrowing species functioning by smell, touch and vibration. Hair covers entire body and serves as sensory input. Some hairs contain temperature or smell receptors. Others detect airborne vibration or act as itchy irritants to potential predators. Hairs are barbed and work their way into skin causing itching, irritation and eye damage.

Behavior: Nocturnal. Considered an invaluable aid in destroying harmful, crop-eating insects. Would rather retreat than bite so poses little threat for humans or pets. Bee sting-like bite with mild to moderate pain, redness and swelling at site. Allergic reactions, not uncommon, can be fatal. Molting process: Stops eating, sheds and produces new exoskeleton in several hours. Occurs only every 1-2 years lying on back. Injury and stress levels are high and humidity levels critical until new skeleton hardens in a few days. Male matures and darkens in color after molting for final time.

Reproduction: Mating can occur throughout the year, but depends on the subspecies and environmental conditions. Females lays 100-500 eggs in silk egg capsule. Some leave eggs in the burrow while others carry them with them. Spiderlings hatch 6 wks later are precocial and abandoned after hatching. Males mature in 1-2 yrs, while females take a little longer to mature (3-10 years). Females rarely kill males after mating. Most males live another one or two years longer.

Diet: Wild: grasshoppers, crickets, moths, beetles, cockroaches, mealworms, small lizards, mammals.
Zoo: One cricket per week.

Conservation: Threatened due to rapidly expanding market for pets. Predators are large mammals, reptile, birds, Pepsis hunting wasps, other tarantulas.

FYI: 800 different tarantula species worldwide.
Not the best choice of pet because of stress and danger to the spider (not the handler) when handled.



Range & Habitat:

Chili, South America in burrows or trees.



Lifespan: Captivity- males 3.5, females plus 20. Wild –males 6, females, plus 20.

Special Adaptations: Two hidden tarsal claws at end of each leg for stability and maneuverability.

IUCN Conservation Status:
NE (Not Evaluated)

