Costa Rican Stripe-Knee Tarantula

Aphonopelma seemanni

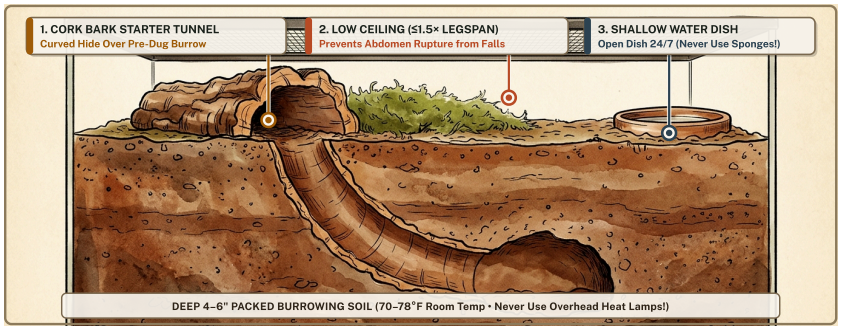


The Quick Version: With bright white racing stripes down dark espresso-brown legs and a peachy-gold belly, the Costa Rican Stripe-Knee (or Zebra Tarantula) is a classic! Unlike desert spiders, these guys are passionate bulldozers from Central America that love **5–6 inches of deep digging soil** with a damp bottom layer.

LIFESPAN	LEGSPAN	ACTIVE HOURS	ADULT TANK	DIET
F: 15–20y • M: 5–8y	4.5–5.5 Inches	Dusk & Night	5–10 Gal Deep Dirt	Crickets, Roaches, Worms

1. Deep Digging Dirt (Damp Underneath!) & Low Ceiling

5–6" OF PACKED SOIL + DAMP BOTTOM LAYER + MAX 1.5× LEGSPAN AIRSPACE!



Normal Room Temp — 72°–80°F
T-shirt room temps are great (no heat lamps!)

Deep Burrow Zone — 70°–75°F
Cooler, slightly damp soil down at the bottom

The Damp-Bottom Trick — 65–75% RH
Bottom 3" of dirt damp; top layer dry (65–75% RH)

Open Water Dish — Fresh Water
Keep a shallow water dish full 24/7 (Skip sponges!)

Nighttime Temp — 66°–72°F
If your house drops under 65°F, use a tiny side heat mat

2. Two Ways That Work — Pick What Fits Your Home

SHORT & SWEET: BOTH OPTIONS WORK GREAT

The Secret to Happy Stripe-Knees: Damp Bottom, Dry Top!

If a Stripe-Knee is pacing the glass walls, 9 times out of 10 its dirt is too shallow or too bone-dry:

OPTION A: 5–6" PACKED REPTILE SOIL WITH CORNER WATER POUR (BEST!)
Pack 5–6" of Reptile Soil + Coco Fiber down firm. Every 2 weeks, pour half a cup of water down one glass corner so it soaks the bottom 3" while the top stays dry!

OPTION B: STARTER CORK TUNNEL + DAMP MOSS CORNER
Poke a starter hole under curved cork bark, and seed the damp lower soil with **Tropical Springtails & Dwarf White Isopods** (never large hungry isopods that could bother a molting spider!).

Tank Setup: Preventing Dangerous Falls

Heavy ground tarantulas can rupture their soft abdomen if they climb the glass and fall more than 1.5× their legspan:

OPTION A: DEEP-SUBSTRATE ACRYLIC TERRESTRIAL ENCLOSURE
Gives great side airflow and lets you fill the bottom two-thirds with burrowing dirt.

OPTION B: 5- TO 10-GAL GLASS TANK FILLED HALFWAY WITH DIRT
Fill the tank halfway up the glass with packed soil so there's only 5–6" of open air between the dirt and the lid!

Heating: Skip Overhead Bulbs!

Big No-No: never put a heat lamp over a tarantula or a heat mat *under* the tank (spiders dig down to cool off, so a bottom mat cooks them!):

OPTION A: NORMAL ROOM TEMPERATURE (68–78°F)
In most homes, you don't need any heater at all.

OPTION B: MICRO HEAT MAT ON THE SIDE WALL + THERMOSTAT
If your house gets chilly in winter (<65°F), stick a tiny 4W heat mat on the upper back/side glass on a thermostat set to 76°F.

Flip Over for Page 2: Feeding Schedule, Team Tips & Grab-and-Go Checklist →

3. Feeding Guide & 'Pet Hole' Phases

AMBUSH HUNTERS: DROP BUGS BY THEIR DOOR AT DUSK & PULL UNEATEN BUGS AFTER 24 HRS!

Juveniles (<2.5") 1–2× Per Week	**1–2 Small/Medium Crickets, Small Dubia Roaches, or Mealworms:** Drop gently near their burrow entrance at dusk.
Adults (4–5.5") Every 7–10 Days	**2–3 Large Crickets, 1–2 Medium Dubia Roaches, or 1 Hornworm:** If their booty is already way bigger than their head shield, skip a week!
Sealed Burrow Do Not Feed!	**Dirt Wall Over the Door = Pre-Molt!** Stripe-Knees love to bulldoze a wall of dirt over their door for weeks before molting. Keep their water dish full and **never dig them up!**

Favorite Stripe-Knee Feeders:

- **Live Dubia Roaches** — Top pick — high protein and won't nibble a spider!
- **Gut-Loaded Crickets** — Triggers an awesome lightning-fast burrow pounce
- **Superworms & Hornworms** — Crush worm heads with tongs so they don't burrow away
- **Wait 7–10 Days Post-Molt!** — Wait until new fangs turn from white to black before feeding!

Skip Calcium Dust for Spiders! Never put reptile calcium powder on bugs for a tarantula — just feed your crickets and roaches fresh carrot/squash or bug chow 24 hours before dinner.

4. Tips, Tricks & Big No-Nos from Our Reptile Team

REAL-WORLD HABITS THAT KEEP THEM THRIVING

Give 'Em 5–6" to Dig!

Stripe-Knees are the happier, calmer spiders when they have a deep burrow. Shallow 1" dirt makes them skittish and defensive.

Flat on Their Back = Molting!

When a tarantula flips completely upside-down on a silk mat, it's molting (NOT dead!). Never touch it, and remove any loose crickets immediately!

Look-Don't-Touch Display Pet

Stripe-Knees can teleport across a table when startled! Enjoy watching them bulldoze dirt and ambush crickets rather than handling them.

Real Water Dish (No Sponge!)

Old books said to put a wet sponge in the dish — don't do it! Spiders can't drink from sponges and they just grow nasty bacteria. Use a shallow open dish.

5. Grab-and-Go Setup Checklist

ASK US ON THE FLOOR — WE'LL HELP YOU MATCH EVERYTHING!

DEEP-DIRT TANK & STARTER CAVE

- [ ] 5.5–10 Gal Terrarium or Deep Acrylic Terrestrial Enclosure
- [ ] 2 Bags of Reptile / Invertebrate Soil + Coco Fiber (for 5–6" depth!)
- [ ] Curved Cork Bark Hide (Starter Burrow) & Sphagnum Moss

WATER DISH & SAFE TOOLS

- [ ] Shallow Resin Water Dish + Water Dechlorinator
- [ ] 10-Inch Feeding Tongs & Soft Paintbrush (for guiding spider)
- [ ] Digital Thermometer / Hygrometer

LIVE FEEDER BUGS

- [ ] Live Dubia Roaches, Crickets, or Mealworms/Hornworms
- [ ] Bug Gut-Load Chow (feed the bugs first!)

A Quick Note from Our Team — Keep Learning & Ask Us Anytime!

The quick version: there's more than one right way to set up a great enclosure! As long as your temperatures, humidity, and diet are dialed in, your pet doesn't care whether its cave is fancy resin or a terra-cotta pot. Bringing home this critter is a **15–20+ year commitment (females)** — use these two pages as your home-base cheat sheet, watch what your pet tells you with their daily behavior, find a good local exotic vet, and call or stop by the shop anytime you have questions!

MY STRIPE-KNEE'S INFO

Name / Morph: _____

Current Diet: _____

Date Adopted: _____