INSIDE FLAP • KEEPER HABITS

## 4 Keys to Long-Term Health

**Small Daily Habits That Prevent 95% of Vet Visits**

### 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.

**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.



BACK COVER • TAKE THIS TO THE AISLE

## Grab-and-Go Setup Checklist

### 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!)

### MY STRIPE-KNEE'S INFO & FEEDING LOG

Name / Morph: _____

Gotcha Date & Weight: _____

Current Feeder Size & Day: _____

**Critter Cabana & Cascade Pet Supply**

Questions about heating, shedding, or a picky eater? Stop by or call our reptile team anytime — we're here for the full 15–20+ year commitment (females)!



CRITTER CABANA & CASCADE PET SUPPLY • CARE GUIDE

# 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.

### QUICK VITAL STATS AT-A-GLANCE

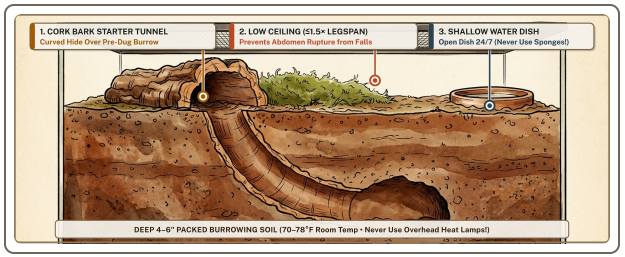
| | |
|---|---|
| LIFESPAN<br>**F: 15–20y • M: 5–8y** | LEGSPAN<br>**4.5–5.5 Inches** |
| ACTIVE HOURS<br>**Dusk & Night** | ADULT TANK<br>**5–10 Gal Deep Dirt** |
| DIET<br>**Crickets, Roaches, Worms** | |

OPEN FOR TANK SETUP, TEMPS, FEEDING & SHOPPING LIST →

STEP 1 • HABITAT & CLIMATE

# 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

**Thermostat & Gauge Rule:** Stick-on dial gauges can be off by 10°F+! Use a digital probe thermometer/hygrometer and always plug heating mats and heat emitters into a **digital thermostat**.



STEP 2 • STOCKED STORE OPTIONS

# Two Ways That Work

**Pick Option A or Option B Based on Your Home Setup**

## 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 in the dirt under a curved piece of cork bark — they'll happily take over and excavate a whole underground cave.

## 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.



STEP 3 • DIET & NUTRITION

# Feeding Guide & 'Pet Hole' Phases

**Ambush Hunters: Drop Bugs by Their Door at Dusk & Pull Uneaten Bugs After 24 Hrs!**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Juveniles (<2.5")**<br>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")**<br>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**<br>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!

**First-Week Rule:** Give your new Costa Rican Stripe-Knee Tarantula **5 to 7 days of peace and quiet** in its new tank before handling or offering its very first meal so it can map out its hides and feel safe!