



BUTTERFLY PAVILION

King Baboon Tarantula (*Pelinobius muticus*)



Country: Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda

Habitat: This tarantula is primarily found in the dry scrublands and savannas of East Africa. It is a fossorial species, meaning it lives in deep burrows that it digs in the ground, often in sandy or clay-rich soils.

Diet: Variety of insects, small mammals, other invertebrates, and occasionally smaller reptiles or amphibians.

Predators: Birds, larger mammals, reptiles, and sometimes humans.

Behavior: This species is known for its aggressive and defensive behavior. When threatened, it will rear up on its hind legs, show its fangs, and produce a hissing sound by rubbing its legs together (stridulation). It is a primarily nocturnal hunter and spends most of its time inside its burrow.

Growth and Development: The King Baboon Tarantula grows slowly and can take several years to reach maturity. They undergo multiple molting stages as they grow, which is when they shed their exoskeleton to accommodate their increasing size.

Lifespan: Females can live up to 25–30 years, while males have a much shorter lifespan of around 5–10 years after reaching maturity.

IUCN Endangered Status: The status of this species is undocumented on the IUCN Red List. However, habitat loss and over-collection for the pet trade are potential threats.

Fun Fact: Despite its fierce reputation, this tarantula is also known for its intricate burrowing behavior, often creating complex tunnel systems that can be several feet deep, providing safety from predators and harsh environmental conditions.