

# ZEN HA

A 4'x2'x2' large and aesthetically pleasing enclosure for low humidity reptiles.

 BY JOHN VIRATA



# HABITATS



PHOTO BY KEVIN WELLS/SHUTTERSTOCK





**Left: Check out how clean the lines are on this enclosure. Top: Assembling the enclosure frame. A rubber mallet is recommended.**

## 4'x2'x2' Wood Panel Reptile Enclosure

I have been keeping herps since I was 10 years old. I explored the canals near my childhood home for introduced African clawed frogs and American bullfrogs and the fields behind my home for fence lizards and alligator skinks. I collected American toad eggs and released the toadlets in my yard as well as in the drainage ditch where they originated. I've had many reptiles over the years and I've purchased enclosures from all the major manufacturers to house them. A relative newcomer to the market, Zen Habitats, offers a range of enclosures that take a different approach to enclosure design and the company's 4'x2'x2' Wood Panel Reptile Enclosure piqued my interest. It is large and has an aesthetically (and functional) pleasing look, and a bonus

is it matches the bamboo flooring of my reptile room. The company sent one for review and here are my thoughts.

The Zen Habitats 4'x2'x2' Wood Panel Reptile Enclosure is designed for reptiles that require lower humidity levels, such as bearded dragons, uromastyx, and other desert lizards and snakes that require 50 percent or less humidity. Too much humidity in this enclosure can damage the composite wood panels. Zen Habitats offers a similar enclosure that uses PVC panels for high humidity applications. The PVC model also supports under tank heating elements and is ideal for both desert and tropical reptiles.

## Construction And Assembly

The Zen Habitats 4'x2'x2' Wood Panel Reptile Enclosure is constructed of a

bamboo laminate composite wood panel that the company says is better than glass at retaining heat. The frame of the enclosure is made of aluminum, the top is a galvanized steel screen and the doors are acrylic.

This enclosure requires assembly. It consists of 12 aluminum frame bars, plastic corner connectors, the galvanized steel screen top, the bamboo laminate wood composite bottom panel, rear panel and two side panels, the two acrylic doors with door knobs and the wire grommet that offers a pass through for power cords.

Assembly is straightforward. Virtually anyone who can read the included instructions or watch the YouTube assembly video should have no problem putting this enclosure together correctly. It is that easy. Although the instructions say a rubber mallet is optional, I would change



**The Zen Habitats 4'x2'x2' Wood Panel Reptile Enclosure ships flat. The frame is clearly labeled, making this enclosure simple to assemble.**



My 8-year-old Applegate California kingsnake sits atop some Zoo Med Mopani wood purchased at the local reptile store.



PHOTO BY JOHN VIRATA



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Zoo Med aspen bedding and Mopani wood round out the enclosure with a Fluker's Deluxe Clamp Lamp housing a ceramic heat emitter.

that to required. It makes assembly so much smoother and quicker. The only issue was with the paper tape that covers the acrylic doors to protect them from scratches. The tape was sometimes stubborn to remove, but the paper still came off fairly easily and for the most part in several large chunks. Once assembled, I placed the enclosure on a vintage wood aquarium stand. The stand wasn't wide enough so a trip to Lowe's for an exact cut 4 feet by 2 feet shelving board placed atop the stand made the perfect

perch for the enclosure.

### First Impressions

The Zen Habitats 4'x2'x2' Wood Panel Reptile Enclosure is very pleasing to the eye with its bamboo laminate composite wood panels coupled with its finely machined aluminum frame and galvanized steel top.

The fact that you are unable to peer into the enclosure via the side and back panels should give your reptile more sense of security. The sides and back are

also non-reflective, which also possibly reduces stress for your pet as it doesn't see its reflection. The front access sliding doors are also designed with reptiles in mind, making it easier for you to handle them when needed without overly stressing the animals.

The size of the enclosure gives your reptile plenty of space to roam, and creating a temperature gradient is easy because of the space available in this enclosure. The enclosure is ideal for those reptiles that don't require as much humidity. For reptiles that require high humidity, Zen Habitats offers the aforementioned PVC model.

The company offers a variety of habitats sized for your specific reptile, as well as matching enclosure stands, stacking spacers to stack your enclosures, and for this model, an extension kit that will enlarge the space to six or eight feet. In all, I am impressed with the beauty and functionality of this enclosure. **REPTILES**

### Zen Habitats

- Zen Habitats 4'x2'x2' Wood Panel Reptile Enclosure
- \$US 329 (\$US 389 for PVC version)
- Three year warranty
- Zenhabitats.com

**JOHN VIRATA** is the editor of REPTILES magazine and ReptilesMagazine.com. He currently keeps two corn snakes (15 and 13 years old), a ball python (8 years old), a Western hognose snake (six years old), and a California kingsnake (10 years old).