

Boa Constrictor

Redtail boa, northern boa, rosy boa, etc.



Approximate life span: 20-30 years
Estimated adult size: 5-10 feet long
Difficulty Level: Intermediate
Hot side temp range: 85-95°F
Cool side temp range: 75-80°F
Humidity level: 60-70% (75-80% in shed)

RECOMMENDED VETERINARY CARE

- Annual exam
- Common medical conditions: parasites, impaction, dysecdysis, stomatitis, burns, live feeding injuries



A variety of snakes fall into the boa constrictor family. Redtail boas are one of the most popular in the pet trade. Boas can be docile and easy to care for once the initial setup is complete, but their strength should never be underestimated.

HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

Housing should be tightly secured and appropriately sized for the length of the snake - generally, the cage should be about $\frac{2}{3}$ the length of your snake. Locks should be used, as boas are strong snakes and accomplished escape artists. Cages should include multiple humid hide boxes for visual security and proper shedding. Boas do require higher humidity than other species, and it can make them more challenging to set up. Substrate should not consist of sand or other materials that can be ingested, due to the increased risk of impaction. Reptile carpet, tile, or newspaper can be used but orchard bark or cypress mulch may help retain humidity. They will also need a sanitized branch strong enough to support the snake's weight. Decorative touches like artificial plants, rock hides, and caves can also be added. Lighting and temperature are key to healthy reptiles. Boas should have a hot side and a cool side for maintaining appropriate temperatures as they cannot regulate body temps on their own. Lights should be on for no more than 12 hours per day, with heat maintained at all times.

DIETARY NEEDS

Boas are carnivores and require a diet of whole prey animals for proper nutrition. It is recommended to feed only frozen/thawed food due to the risk of injury from live prey. Provide food that is about the same girth, or very slightly larger, as the largest part of your snake. Food should be warmed and fed once a week for younger snakes and every 2-4 weeks for adults. Never microwave food as it can heat unevenly and burn your snake. Remove and dispose of uneaten food within 24 hours. Provide a deep, stable water dish with fresh water at all times for soaking and humidity.