



Dumeril's Boa *Boa dumerili*

- Dumeril's boas occur on the island of Madagascar off of Africa in forest and woodland habitat.
- A heavy bodied medium sized boa, the ground color is usually light to dark brown, reddish brown, to pinkish with numerous narrow darker saddles and bow tie shaped blotches.
- If provided the proper care, Dumeril's boas can attain longevity of 20-25 years or more.

Size

Ranges from 12-18 inches as neonates. 5-9 feet on average (54 to 108"). Consider the potential adult size of a Dumeril's boa prior to obtaining one.

Housing

Housing must be sealed and escape proof. Young Dumeril's boas can be housed in a 20-30 gallon terrarium or enclosure. Adult boas should be housed in a minimum of a 50-70 gallon long terrarium or similar 36" to 48" by 20" enclosure. Boas will thrive on a substrate of newspaper, cage liner material, or cypress mulch. Do not use pine or cedar shavings, as these substrates are toxic to snakes. Provide a water bowl or dish and a hide box at all times in the enclosure. Artificial foliage, driftwood, and other cage furnishings can provide additional security. Overall care for Dumeril's boas is quite similar to that of Boa constrictors, except this species tends to utilize burrowing mediums/substrates more frequently.

Create a thermal gradient (or a warm side) in the cage/enclosure with an appropriate sized under tank heating pad, ceramic, or radiant heat emitter. Overhead, incandescent lighting can also be used, but is not required for Boas (which are primarily nocturnal). Ideal temperatures for boas range from 75-80 degrees F on the cool side and 86-92 degrees F on the warm side.

Spot clean the enclosure for urates, feces, or uneaten food at least once per week. Be sure to periodically replace the substrate, clean, and disinfect the enclosure and its furnishings at minimum every 2-3 months.

Feeding/Diet

In the wild, Dumeril's boas will prey upon a variety of animals including rodents and other small to medium sized mammals, birds, and lizards.

Most young Dumeril's boas are large enough to be started off on weanling to small adult mice or rats once per 5-7 days. Food items can gradually be increased as needed. Most adult boas can be fed medium to large adult rats or rabbits once every 14 days (or bi weekly). A general rule of thumb to follow when feeding snakes is to provide prey items that are approximately the same width as the widest point of the snake.

Handling

As with many snakes, young and juvenile boas are often initially more nervous and defensive. Young boas may gape and hiss, and attempt to bite what they perceive to be a threat or a predator. Handle your boa gently and deliberately, but do not drop or injure the animal. Most Dumeril's boas become quite docile and accustomed to handling. Do not place or allow a larger snake around the neck when handling a Dumeril's boa.

****Also be sure to practice basic cleanliness and hygiene associated with proper husbandry after touching or handling any animals or animal enclosures to prevent the possibility of contracting salmonellosis or any other zoonotic pathogens****