



Rosy Boa *Lichanura trivirgata*

- Rosy boas are only one of two species of boa native to North America and the United States; Southwestern United States and Mexico.
- The other species of North American boa is the Rubber Boa.
- A small, heavy bodied boa that varies from tan. Grayish, to cream colored with reddish, to orangish or black longitudinal stripes.
- If provided the proper care, rosy boas can attain longevity of 20-25 years or more.

Size

Ranges from 5-8 inches as neonates, and 3-4 feet (36-48 inches) for most adults.

Housing

Housing must be sealed and escape proof. Neonate rosy boas can be housed in a 10-15 gallon terrarium or enclosure. Adult rosy boas should be housed in a minimum of a 20-30 gallon long terrarium or enclosure. Rosy boas will thrive on a substrate of newspaper, cage liner material, aspen or Sani Chip shavings. Do not use pine or cedar shavings, as these substrates are toxic to snakes. Provide a small water bowl or dish occasionally and a hide box within the enclosure. Artificial foliage, driftwood, and other cage furnishings can provide additional security.

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 ball pythons (which are primarily nocturnal). Ideal temperatures for ball pythons 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, rosy boas will prey upon rodents and other small mammals, and small birds.

Most neonates can be started off on pinky or hopper mice once per week. Food items can gradually be increased as needed. Most adult rosy boas can be fed adult mice once every 5-7 days. 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

Rosy boas are quite placid and innocuous snakes, and reluctant to bite under most circumstances. Handle your rosy boa gently and deliberately, but do not drop or injure the animal. Most rosy boas will become more tolerant and accustomed to handling as they become older.

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