



## Woma Python *Aspidites ramsayi*

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- Woma pythons are indigenous to the arid to semi arid regions of central Australia.
- The python genus *Aspidites* is unique among pythons in that heat pits are lacking. This is a moderately built python with a ground color of light brown, yellowish, to tan or cream color with darker brown or reddish brown cross bands. The head is yellowish to orange-yellow, with darker markings above the brows of each eye.
- If provided the proper care, womas can attain longevity of 15-20 years or more.

### **Size**

Ranges from 8-12 inches as hatchlings, and 5 to 7 feet (54-84 inches) for most adults.

### **Housing**

Housing must be sealed and escape proof. Hatchling womas can be housed in a 20 gallon sized terrarium or enclosure. Adult womas should be housed in a minimum of a 3' x 2' long terrarium or enclosure. Womas will do well on a substrate of newspaper, cage liner material, aspen or Sani Chip shavings, 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.

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 most snakes (which are primarily nocturnal). Ideal temperatures for womas range from 75-80 degrees F on the cool side/ambient temperature and 85-90 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, womas are voracious predators of rodents and other small mammals, birds, and other reptiles (including other snakes).

Most hatchling womas can be started off on hopper or fuzzie rats every 3-5 days. Food items can gradually be increased as needed. Most adult womas can be fed medium to large adult sized rats once every 5-7 days, and are typically voracious eaters presenting few feeding issues. 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, hatchling and juvenile womas may initially be nervous and defensive. They musk or defecate, or bite when alarmed. Handle your woma gently and deliberately, but do not drop or injure the animal. Many womas will become docile and more tolerant and accustomed to handling as they become older. This genus of pythons may still exhibit a strong and motivated feeding response, however.

**\*\*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\*\***