

Prehistoric Pets Care Sheet

RED TAIL BOAS

(*Boa constrictor*)

General Information

There are several forms of Red Tail Boas ranging from Mexico, Central America, and South America. Some of the more popular types of Boas are Hogg Island, Argentine, Colombian, Peruvian and Suriname. Size varies between the different species, Colombian Boas (*Boa constrictor imperator*) range from 5-10 feet. True Red Tail Boas (*Boa constrictor constrictor*) such as Suriname, Guyana, and Peruvian Boas can reach 10-14 feet. Hogg Island Boas (*Boa constrictor ssp.*) are located on small islands off the coast of Honduras and are a smaller species, typically growing 3-5 feet. Argentine Boas (*Boa constrictor occidentalis*) are found in Paraguay and Argentina and grow 7-9 feet in length. Boa Constrictors are long lived snakes and can live over 20 years. The oldest Boa Constrictor lived over 40 years. Prehistoric Pets promotes responsible snake ownership and we recommend locking cages that prevent accidental escape. Large constrictors and other escaped snakes can have a negative impact on the general public which can lead to a ban of snake ownership.



Temperature

Red Tail Boas should be maintained at 85-90 degrees during the day, with a hot spot under the heat light reaching 95 degrees. Nighttime temperatures need to range between 75-80 degrees. Daily misting should be used to maintain humidity between 75-90 %. Snakes shed in one complete piece, if yours is shedding in pieces the humidity is too low. Another option to increase humidity is to provide a box with a small entrance, for the snake to enter, filled with damp potting soil and moss.

Housing

Baby Red Tail Boas can be kept in 29 gallon or larger terrariums. Red Tail Boas grow quickly and we recommend that you provide the largest cage possible. One can expect an adult Red Tail Boa to need a cage at least 6 feet long by 3 feet wide.

Bedding

Our recommendation for bedding is bark or coconut bark, this bedding holds moisture very well and duplicates their natural environment.

Food

Red Tail Boas feed on fuzzy or small adult mice as babies and juveniles. As your snake grows it will soon move up to rats and even small rabbits. We recommend that you feed baby and juvenile Red Tail Boas 1-2 times per week. Adult Red Tail Boas can be fed once every 7-10 days to maintain proper body weight. Like most snakes, Red Tail Boas typically will not eat when they are preparing to shed. After your snake has shed you can return to your normal feeding regiment. If your snake doesn't eat make sure you remove the rodent from the cage. Rodents can bite snakes when they are hungry and can injure or kill your snake.

Cleaning and Handling

The terrarium should be cleaned as necessary. Any fecal matter should be cleaned out several times a week. The bedding should be completely changed once a month and fresh clean water should be provided at all times. The inside of the terrarium can be cleaned out with an appropriate reptile cage cleaner, we recommend Natural Chemistry's Healthy Habitat. Red Tail Boas can be handled on a daily basis and always wash your hands before and after handling them.

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Prehistoric Pets Inc. (909) 465-6085

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