

Boa Constrictor (Common boa, Columbian boa)

Boa constrictor ssp.

Family: Boidae

Locale: Central America; eastern Ecuador, northern & eastern Peru, northern Bolivia, Brazil, central and eastern Columbia, Venezuela, the Guianas, Trinidad and Tobago

Habitat: Wide range of habitats, rainforest clearings, woodlands, grasslands, dry forests, semi-desert

Average Size: 6-12', females tend to be larger (most are 5-8')

Average Lifespan: 20-30 years

Activity: Nocturnal

Captive Care: Large enclosure (suggest 4x2x2 minimum size for adult), undertank heating on one side; substrate: newsprint, dried aspen, Care Fresh; water bowl large enough for soaking (e.g., large litter box), fresh water at all times; shelter, will climb if provided branches and an elevated resting platform. Young require smaller caging. Humidity 60-70% - may have shed issues if not humid enough. If this happens, soaking in tepid water for ~30 minutes will help.

Temperature: Gradient of 75°F (23.5°C) to 85°F (29°C), with basking spot (undertank heat) 90-95°F (31-34.5°C)

Lighting: No special lighting required. Low wattage fluorescent bulb can be used to provide day/night cycle.

Diet: Eats mice, rats, rabbits, and/or chicks. Feed young every 7-10 days adults every 10-14 days. Food as big around as the widest part of the snake's body. Do not handle snake for a day or two after feeding (larger boas may need 4-5 days to fully digest their meal). Frozen-thawed food preferred.

Breeding: Usually during dry season (April to August), ovoviviparous – gestation 5-8 months, average litter 25.

Temperament: Can be calm, but easily spooked if move too quickly in front of them.

Notes: Heavy bodied, powerful constrictor with large head and large teeth; care must be exercised in handling. Enjoy climbing (semi-arboreal).

References:

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Compiled by Eileen Underwood. Updated 9/2016.



Range Map:

<https://www.zoo.org/page.aspx?pid=1933#.V84ASzXIQ2w>