

Royal Python Care Sheet



PROFILE

Common Name: **Royal Python / Ball Python**

Latin Name: **Python Regius**

Native To: **West Africa**

Size: **4 – 6ft**

Life Span: **20+ Years**

HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

Environment:

Arid woodland with numerous hiding places and strong branches to climb on

Vivarium Size:

Royal Pythons, or 'Ball Pythons' as they are commonly called, enjoy a bit of room. They are often found curled up in a ball underneath logs and leaves or wrapped around branches where they feel safe. They often stretch out to their full potential inside vivariums and therefore will require a 36"x12" habitat once they reach adulthood.

Substrate:

We recommend a substrate of forest floor, cypress mulch or arcadia earthmix for Royal Pythons as they have high water retention; helping to raise humidity in the vivarium, and they look natural. More standard, easy to clean options are available but we have found that a high quality substrate will hold humidity and aid in shedding and enrichment.

Food and Water:

Water should be provided at all times. Royal Pythons like a large water bowl to soak in throughout the day, especially when they are due to shed. We recommend that this water is changed regularly.

Royal Pythons are strictly carnivorous and will therefore need to be fed a diet of mice and rats. A pinkie or fuzzy mouse fed once a week will be suitable for hatchling pythons whereas adults can consume jumbo mice – medium rats, chicks, multimammates, gerbils and hamsters.

Royal Python's are notorious for feeding problems. The first thing to remember is not to worry too much; some royal pythons have been known to go for 22 months without a bite to eat!

If your new pet does go off its food, there are a number of methods of enticement ranging from scenting the food to putting the snake in a small dark enclosure with a mouse.

There are many more techniques. Please feel free to ask members of the reptile section for more details.

We strongly recommend feeding only pre-killed prey items. It is now illegal to feed live prey to snakes in the U.K. as, not only is it unethical, if the snake is not hungry and does not wish to feed, the mouse will turn on the snake and start biting away at it – often leading to infections and death.

Heat/Light Requirements:

Like the majority of other snakes, Royal Pythons do not require UV radiation. More often than not, Royals will hide away from it, due to them being nocturnal animals.

Royal Pythons require 24 hour heating with one side of the vivarium being the designated 'cool' end and the other being the 'hot' or 'basking' area. This can be achieved by placing a heat source on one side of the vivarium.

As they are cold blooded animals, their body temperature is the same as that of the environment around them and therefore Royal Pythons will move around the vivarium until they find their optimum temperature. At night we recommend a temperature drop of about 5 - 8°C.

Below are the ideal temperatures for your Royal Python, all of which can be thermostatically controlled:

Day (cool end): 24 - 26°C

Day: (warm end): 30 - 31°C

Night: 20 - 24°C

Please note that this care sheet is only for your basic husbandry knowledge and that it is always recommended that you do further reading.

FURTHER READING

www.anapsid.org

Any Problems?

Give us a ring ASAP on 0121 744 1300

Or email us at shirley_reptiles@live.co.uk

**Shirley Aquatics
Becketts Farm
Alcester Road
Wythall
Birmingham
B47 6AJ**

