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4973 3858

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www.gatesofeden.com.au

Aussie Pythons

as pets

Enclosures: Pythons as adults need large vivariums. You can either set them up in a small vivarium to begin with or instead purchase a large setup that will be big enough for their adult life. A minimum size for an adult python should be, 1220mm long x 450mm wide x 450mm high, however we prefer a size of 1800mm long x 600mm wide x 600mm high being constructed of timber with glass doors, we use minimal ventilation to keep the heat in. Glass vivariums are also used, however they do not retain the required heat as easily and the glass is cold for the Python to touch. Pythons are great escape artists make sure there are no gaps in your vivarium.

Heating: For proper food digestion and body functions, pythons need a heat source as they cannot generate their own body heat. In the wild they rely on natural sunlight during the day, and at night natural rock crevices that have been heated up during the day. A basking spot of between 30 to 35 degrees with a cool end of less than 26 degrees. A temperature gradient in the enclosure must be provided so that they can regulate their body temperature as they need, from very warm at one end to cool at the other end. All heating devices need to be connected to a thermostat to avoid overheating. A protective cage around the reflector globe or heating device is also recommended to stop pythons from burning themselves when they try to coil around it.

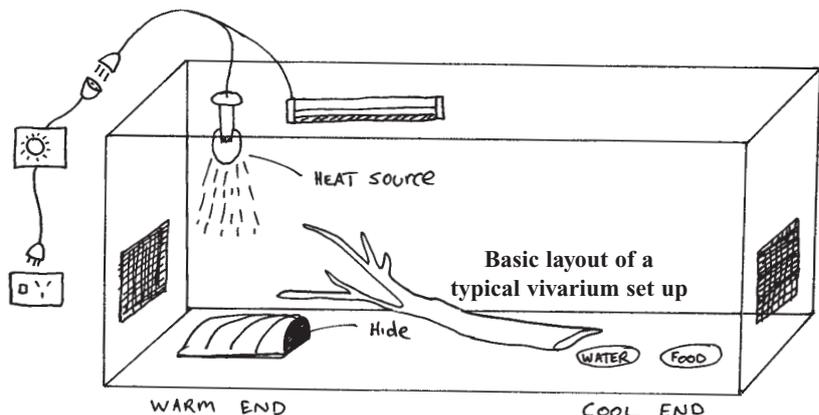
Substrate: We use artificial grass, cut out two pieces to suit the size of the vivarium. That way when you wash one you will have a replacement ready. Newspaper is often used by those that have large collections. Other types of substrates such as leaf litter, woodchips, bark and walnut husks are also used. If you use these substrates, a word of caution, feed your python off these substrates to avoid ingestion of these substrates which can cause blockages in your python. We don't use sand, soil or gravel as these can cause many problems.

Ultra Violet Lighting: It has been shown that UVA and UVB wavelengths of invisible light are very important for Diamnod Pythons, UVA stimulates their natural behaviour and UVB produces vitamin D3 in the skin of the python, this vitamin allows the uptake of calcium through the stomach and without adequate calcium they will suffer from poor bone development. The most common forms of ultra violet lighting are fluoro tubes with a UVB rating of about 5%. These tubes must be placed above the cage within 200mm of your basking Python. There should be no glass or plastic between the fluoro tube and the Python as this material will filter out the ultra violet light. These fluoro tubes need to be replaced every 12 months as they lose their effectiveness over time. Other types of pythons may also benefit from ultraviolet light. pythons generally get their vitamin D3 from their food (rodents).

Food: Frozen thawed out mice, rats and chickens are the safest to use, depending on the size of your python, starting from pinkie mice and increasing in size as your python grows. No more than two rodents at a time, four days apart. The more food that goes in, the more they will grow. From hatching if fed frequently they can be 3 to 4 foot in as little as 12 months. Just remember when they have had a meal they need heat to digest their food! Clean drinking water must be available at all times.

Humidity: Pythons need moisture in the air to help stay hydrated and to be able to shed properly. A humidity of 45% to 65% is required for a successful shed. If you find the humidity is too low just increase the size of the water bowl.

Other Important Points of Care: When your python sheds, check that all of the skin has been removed especially from the tip of the tail, otherwise successive sheds will constrict the tail, stopping blood flow and causing the tip to die and fall off! If you use a heat mat, check the temperature, if it is too hot to touch use a dimming switch or thermostat to reduce the temperature, otherwise serious injury will result causing severe blistering and tissue damage resulting in death! Never take your python outside to sun in a glass tank or vivarium, the sun can quickly overheat the enclosure and become fatal for your pet. Direct sunlight through a house window into the vivarium is not recommended either! Pythons love to climb, make sure their tank furnishings are safe and secure. If you have the unfortunate experience of a reptile mite infestation on your python, seek advice immediately on the removal of these pests as they can kill your pet. You are best to keep pythons on their own, because during feeding time, they can sometimes latch onto their mate and make a meal out of him or her. Wash your hands before and after handling your pet as sometimes they can be carriers of disease.



**For the acquisition of pythons and further information
phone Shane at Gates of Eden Nature Centre on (02) 4973 3858**