



Amazing Animals Fact sheets

Boas and Pythons

Boas and Pythons are non-venomous snakes that constrict their prey (ie. wrap it in tight coils). Pythons kill their prey by squeezing (constricting) them in tight coils. Their diet mainly consists of birds and mammals. The Reticulated Python is one of the largest snakes in the world, and can reach lengths of over 8m. They are common throughout parts of South-east Asia.



Boa Constrictor

Boa constrictors grow up to 4 metres in length and may weigh up to 30 kilograms. Boa constrictors are truly a beautiful snake with very distinctive patterns on their bodies. They are generally creamy brown to light brown in colour and patterned with ovals and diamonds. These patterns camouflage particularly well in the dappled light of the rainforests. Boas are ambush predators and rely on this camouflage to capture their prey.

Habitat

You will find boa constrictors throughout South and Central America in rainforests, agricultural land, semi arid scrub areas and they can even be found in local villages.

Diet

As their name suggest, boa constrictors constrict their prey. This involves the snake tightly coiling around the prey, not crushing it, but severely restricting movement. As the prey breathes out the tightening coils prevent the prey from inhaling. Very quickly the prey item asphyxiates (suffocates). To accomplish this level of constriction, boa constrictors are extremely muscular and usually heavy

bodied snakes. The boa constrictor will prey on birds, mammals and other reptiles and generally hunts at night.

Breeding

Boa constrictors become sexually mature at about 2-3 years of age. They are solitary animals except during the breeding season. Mating occurs about once a year. Unlike its close relative, the python, Boa Constrictors give birth to fully-formed, live young. They will usually bear up to 50 young during the summer months. The young begins feeding within a week or two of birth and grow quickly.

Australia Zoo Boa Constrictor profiles



Nicole

One of the most popular experiences at Australia Zoo is our wandering wildlife program, giving visitors an up close look at some of the zoo's animals. Reptiles play a major role in the program, particularly the boa constrictors. We have a number of red-tailed boas that participate in the program, educating guests about how fascinating snakes and reptiles are. Special mention should be given to a very important snake, Nicole; the mother of them all... Weighing in at around 13kg, Nicole's roving days are over. You can visit her in the treehouse at Bindi's Island.

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