



CORN SNAKE

Care Guide

Corn snakes are inquisitive and mischievous snakes who are extremely active and grow to around 3-5 feet

Genus, Species	Pantherophis guttatus
Adult Size	3-5 feet
Habitat	Fields, Forests,
Lifespan	15-20+ Years
Diet	Mice once a week
Ambient Temp (f)	74-78
Basking Temp (f)	86-88
Night time Temp (f)	70-72
UVB Zone	1 (UVI 0.0-0.7)
Humidity (%)	40-50
Locality	North America
Difficulty	1/5

Health Check (Common issues)

Eyes– check the eyes are clear of infection, discharge or stuck eye caps (these can occur from a dry shed, increase the humidity or place snake on soak periodically until eye caps come off).

Skin– check the skin for black spots or raised scales which can be a sign of mites. Mites can usually be seen around the eye socket and under the chin. Mites can be treated using a number of chemical products or for a natural cure, Taururus predatory mites can be used regularly for prevention and treatment.

Respiratory Infections– RI is a term for a broad spectrum of infections in the lungs and respiratory system. It is generally caused by ill health along with damp or cold conditions and can be treated with a nebuliser. We always recommend seeing the vet if you suspect RI, however it is extremely rare and is not usually the actual cause of the symptoms that are seen.

Housing your snake:

There are a number of wooden, plastic and glass enclosure available for corn snake. Always purchase an enclosure which is a suitable size for your animal. Plastic or wooden and part glass enclosures are the best as glass alone can make it hard to control temperature. Always try to use a thermostat with your enclosure to enable the snake to gain suitable hot and cold temperatures. There are many substrates available including aspen, lignocel or numerous natural and forest like substrates. Provide a large water bowl big enough for your snake to bathe in if it chooses to soak. Depending on the enclosure, you will need a heat mat or bulb/ceramic lamp for your snake in order to provide the required hot spot. UVB should be provided at low level as this is beneficial for the snakes health and awareness of daylight hours. The enclosure should have adequate ventilation so that the tank doesn't become humid and mouldy. The substrate can be spot cleaned daily and the enclosure should be fully cleaned and substrate replaced every 4 weeks or sooner. Corn snakes feed on pinkie mice when they are newly hatched and eventually move up size at a time to Large or Jumbo mice. Corn snakes should not be fed rats as they are not able to process such high fat items resulting in retained fatty lumps which cause ill health.

Corn snakes are closely related to rat snakes and are able to breed cross species to create hybrids– this is where the Scaleless and Palmetto genes originate. Corn snakes are very fertile breeders and usually lay between 10-30 eggs per clutch- they have the ability to do this 3 times, or so, every season.

Handling your snake:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before and after handling your snake
- Use a hook to gently stroke the top of your snakes nose to distinguish between handling and feeding times (tap training)
- Pick your snake up from the bottom by scooping it and do not handle the first 3rd of the snakes body where the vital organs are
- Do not handle your snake after eating, always wait at least 48 hours to prevent stress

Sexing your snake:

Male and female snakes may differ between sizes and length of tail, but to get an accurate gender of your snake there are 2 methods available. 1 is to get a set of probes and probe your snake by sliding the probe under the vent towards the tail. If the probe only goes in a small amount then the snake is female, if the snake is male the probe will slide further, this is where the hemipenes are. The other is to 'pop' the snake which involves holding the snakes tail in one hand and gently bending whilst rolling towards the vent with the other hand, exposing the snakes genitals. **Always have your snake sexed by a professional to avoid harm.**

Shopping list:

- Substrate: Bark chips, lignocel, aspen, cypress mulch
- Heat bulb/ceramic/heat mat
- UVB light
- Thermometer, Hygrometer and Thermostat
- Feeding tongs
- A large water bowl that the snake can bathe in
- Hides
- Plants/Décor
- Pet care guide/sheet
- Reptile safe disinfectant

Feeding your snake:

When feeding your corn snake, you should try to wiggle the prey item as though it is moving as it would in the wild. Corn snakes do not have heat pits like some other snakes such as pythons, but it is still worth dipping the prey in hot water before attempting to feed. Some smaller corn snakes can be drop feeders so if your snake does not eat at first, leave the food item over night and remove in the morning if not eaten. When in shed, snakes often do not feed so this could be why it has missed a feed. If you are concerned, please get in touch and we can offer advice on feeding.