

# RETICULATED PYTHON

## Care Guide



**A large, extremely intelligent Python reaching up to 24 foot in the wild.**

**Many retics are much smaller in captivity at around 8-14 foot.**

|                            |                     |  |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--|
| <b>Genus, Species</b>      | Python reticulatus  | <b>Health Check (Common issues)</b><br><b>Eyes</b> – 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)<br><b>Skin</b> – 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, Taurrus predatory mites can be used regularly for prevention and treatment.<br><b>Respiratory Infections</b> – 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. |
| <b>Adult Size</b>          | 8-24 feet           |  |
| <b>Habitat</b>             | Rainforest          |  |
| <b>Lifespan</b>            | 15-25 Years         |  |
| <b>Diet</b>                | Mice/ Rats/ Rabbits |  |
| <b>Ambient Temp (f)</b>    | 78-82               |  |
| <b>Basking Temp (f)</b>    | 90-92               |  |
| <b>Night time Temp (f)</b> | 72-78               |  |
| <b>UVB Zone</b>            | 1 (UVI 0.0-0.7)     |  |
| <b>Humidity (%)</b>        | 50-70               |  |
| <b>Locality</b>            | Asia                |  |
| <b>Difficulty</b>          | 3/5                 |  |

### Housing your snake:

Reticulated pythons should be kept alone and never with another snake. They can be paired for breeding times but should live alone the rest of the time as they do in the wild. Keeping them together can cause a number of health issues including difficulty feeding. There are a number of wooden, plastic and glass enclosure available for reticulated pythons. 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. Reticulated pythons can reach large lengths and some have been recorded at 25ft in the wild, however with a sensible feeding regime this is more likely to be 9ft for males and 14ft for females, with dwarf and SD being smaller. Considerations should always be made to housing the snake as an adult. Reticulated pythons require a large enclosure which is custom built, there are a few vivarium building services available. Whilst your snake is still small, there are hatchling tubs available or some people choose to use Really Useful Boxes which are also available as custom kits. Heating should be provided via a heat lamp if using a vivarium, or a heat mat if choosing a terrarium or RUB. UVB light is required at a low level where possible. Forest substrate is best as it retains some humidity which is useful for shedding purposes, but Lignocel, Aspen and other substrates are also suitable. Provide a large water bowl which should be replaced with fresh water daily. Reticulated pythons like to climb, so it is a good idea to provide branches or an alternative to climb on.

### 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:

Reticulated Pythons find their food by using heat pits on the sides of their mouths which sense the warmth of their preys body. Dipping your snakes food item in boiling hot water prior to serving allows them to find the prey and mimics the body temperature of the prey item. Shake boiling water drips on to a piece of kitchen roll before serving. Never use a microwave to heat up your snakes food item.