

Jungle Bob's Care Sheet King Snake (Lampropeltis sp)

General Information

The Kingsnake is an ideal pet for those new to Snake keeping. With proper care, pets can exceed 20 years of age. There are many species of Kingsnake and several variations of pattern and color within those species caused by specific localities in nature and selective breeding in captivity. Adults can reach over 4ft in length and stay relatively thin (similar to Corn Snakes). Known for their ferocious appetite, they eat readily and are so bold that they can often mistake a finger for a food item.

<u>Housing</u>

We recommend baby Kingsnakes start off in 20 Gallon Long terrariums (30"x12"x12") for roughly the first 1-2 years depending on growth rate. A 30-40 gallon terrarium (36"x18") makes a good home for a single adult. The tank's screen lid **must** be secured by 2-4 cage clips.

Temperatures should range from around 68-72 on the cool end, with a basking site of around 88-95 on the hot side. Provide your pet with the largest home possible, so that a thermal gradient (areas of different temperatures that allow the snake to regulate its metabolism) can be established. You can reach the desired temperatures with Jungle Bob's Basking and Night Spot Bulbs. Reptile Heat Pads are also useful for creating basking sites, and as a night-time heat source. The tank may be misted lightly on occasion, but otherwise should remain mostly dry.

King Snakes are best housed on Aspen, Cypress Mulch. A terrarium liner, with a reptile cave for shelter, may also be employed, but these snake like to burrow so that is not ideal.

<u>Diet</u>

King snakes feed on pinkie and fuzzy mice as babies and juveniles. As your snake grows it will soon move up to adult mice and small rats. We recommend that you feed baby and juvenile king snakes one time per week. Adult king snakes can be fed once every 7-10 days to maintain

proper body weight. Like most snakes, king snakes typically will not eat when they are preparing to shed. Rodents can injure or kill your snake and should, therefore, be purchased **frozen** rather than live.

Cleaning and Handling

The terrarium should be cleaned as necessary. Any fecal matter or uneaten food should be removed daily. The substrate should be completely changed once each month. The inside of the terrarium can be scrubbed with an appropriate reptile cage cleaner.

Speckled Kingsnakes tolerate gentle handling well, but like all reptiles they can bite when threatened; the snake's head should not be allowed near one's face. Always wash your hands before and after handling any animal.

Fun Fact

This genus of snake is well known for its bold attitude and never ending appetite. They say it gets its name because besides eating rodents, lizards, small birds, and amphibians, they are also known to eat other snakes! Including Rattlesnakes! "King" Snake, indeed!

This information is fairly broad and does not encompass ALL Kingsnake species specifically. Be sure to ask about your specific type to make sure the care does not differ from the information given here.

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