

Carpet Python.

Morelia spilota ssp.

Lifespan: 25+ years
Size: 1.6m-3.5m
Enclosure: Minimum 90 x 60 x 120cm
Diet: Frozen mice, rats, quails and rabbits
Care Level: Low



Enclosure.

Carpet pythons are large, heavy bodied, semi-arboreal snakes. As adults it is important that they are housed in an enclosure with adequate height enabling them to climb.

For one adult carpet python, an enclosure with dimensions of at least 90 x 60 x 120cm is recommended, however extra height is always beneficial. Large, purpose built timber reptile cabinets make an ideal carpet python enclosure. It is important that the enclosure has sufficient ventilation as well as a secure, lockable door. The enclosure can be furnished to re-create the animals natural environment including the use of a background, artificial plants and rock ornaments as well as timber branches for climbing and basking. An absorbent substrate is also important such as coco fibre, aspen or kitty litter.

Maintenance.

Providing adequate temperature gradients within a python's enclosure is essential for their health and wellbeing.

Most carpet pythons require a basking spot maintained between 32-35°C and a cool end of 22-26°C during the day. Night time temperatures should not drop below 21°C, however specific temperature requirements vary between carpet python sub-species.

Temperatures should be checked daily and must be regulated with the use of a good quality thermostat. Recommended sources of heat include the use of incandescent, halogen or ceramic globes as well as heat mats and heat cords. Kellyville Pets recommends the use of ultraviolet (UV) lighting with all python species. There are a number of positive benefits to a python's health by providing them with UV lighting. A 5.0 UVB tube or compact globe is an ideal source of artificial UV light.

Pythons require a 'day and night' cycle with heat lights running for approximately 10-12 hours and UVB lights 4-6 hours each day. Pythons also benefit from short periods of access to unfiltered, natural light outdoors.

It is important to maintain high standards of cleanliness and hygiene within the python's enclosure. Daily 'spot checks' should be carried out and any faeces, shed skin or uneaten food removed immediately. A full substrate change should be carried out every 6-8 weeks (depending on what substrate is used) and the enclosure thoroughly cleaned with a reptile-safe disinfectant.



Diet.

In the wild, carpet pythons will prey upon a variety of different animals including rodents, birds, possums and even bats.

They are opportunistic, ambush predators and will eat whenever food is available. In captivity, carpet pythons can be fed on a range of different food types depending on their age and size. Readily available python foods at Kellyville Pets include commercially bred mice, rats, quail and rabbits.

A juvenile python should be fed an appropriately sized rat or mouse once every 7-10 days, approximately. Adult carpet pythons can be fed a large rat or rabbit every 2-4 weeks. Food items must be completely thawed and warmed up (place in hot water) before being offered to the snake. Some keepers may choose to feed captive pythons in a designated 'feeding' tub, separate to their normal enclosure.

It is also good practice to keep a record book of when a python eats, what sized food item it takes as well as when it sheds its skin. Fresh water should also be available to the python at all times and changed regularly.



Thinking about getting a python as a pet?

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Common Health Issues.

Mites: Reptile mites cause significant irritation to pythons. A python may submerge itself in its water bowl if it is infested with mites.

Dysecdysis (abnormal shedding): Low humidity levels can sometimes result in a python having an 'incomplete' shed.

Respiratory Infection: A bacterial or viral infection that may be caused by incorrect temperature, inadequate ventilation or too much humidity.

Red Flags.

If you notice any of the following symptoms, please contact your vet.

- Loss of appetite
- Consistently submerging in water bowl
- Wheezing sound when breathing
- Fluid or discharge from mouth or nostrils
- Diarrhoea

Essentials.

Products required to care for your carpet python:

Enclosure (min. 90 x 60 x 120cm)
Water bowl
Hide
Substrate
Basking log
Background
Artificial plants

Heat fitting and globe
UV fitting and globe
Thermostat
Thermometer
Timer
Reptile disinfectant

Frozen food
Feeding tongs
Feeding enclosure



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