



Pamper your Fin, Fur or Feathered Family

...and your friends with Scales

Ball Python

Python regius

Lifespan: 30+ years.



Size: Adults can reach 4 to 5 feet in length, with males usually slightly smaller than females.

Sexing: There are different methods of sexing snakes: comparing tail lengths, popping and probing. An experienced veterinarian or breeder should do popping or probing.

Enclosure: Ball Pythons do best in a tank that provides them with room to roam around and exercise. A 3'x1 ½' glass tank is adequate for a single adult but a larger tank is better. For a baby or hatchling a standard 10-gallon tank with screen top will do. Snakes are excellent at nosing their way through tight places. Snakes can escape from regular screen tops so the lid needs to be secured with a lock. ***Pisces recommends: ExoTerra All-Glass Terrariums.***

Hiding/Climbing Spots: A snake cave or other hiding spot is recommended. Having more than one hide is recommended, giving the snake a choice between a warm hide and a cooler one.

Humidity: The enclosure should be well-ventilated and misted to keep the humidity high (60% to 80%) and aid in the process of shedding. A moss hide helps maintain high humidity when the snake is shedding. If your Ball Python is having trouble a 20 minute warm bath can help to lift the dead skin off of the new layer of skin. Use a hygrometer to monitor humidity levels. Provide a water dish large enough for the snake to curl its entire body into for bathing and to help with shedding.

Substrate: Reptile carpet, cypress mulch, or aspen shaving are best for substrates and moss can be added to the tank for extra humidity. ***Pisces recommends: Aspen shavings.***

Heat: Maintain a temperature of as low as 75°F at night. An ambient temperature of 80°F - 85°F should be maintained during the day, with a basking spot of 90°F - 92°F. Snakes cannot sustain normal body functions if kept at a temperature that is too low. Use a heat bulb on one end of the tank to create a temperature gradient or an under tank heater may also be applied. ***Pisces recommends: ExoTerra bulbs and fixtures.***

UV Lighting: Ball Pythons are nocturnal and do not require UVB/UVA lighting.

Feeding: Feed both juvenile and adult Ball Pythons once a week. Snakes normally eat live prey, but they can be switched to frozen food (be sure that the food is thoroughly thawed before offering it to your snake). Do not feed prey larger than the maximum girth of the snake.

Handling: When handling a baby or juvenile Ball Python it is best to pick them up slowly but confidently, with no hesitation. If you hesitate or are nervous the snake might become frightened. Ball pythons are generally docile but can behave aggressively if they feel threatened. If this happens when you are handling your snake, return it to its tank immediately. Avoid touching the snake's head until it is comfortable with you.

Cleaning: Snake cages should be cleaned out once a week with a 1:10 vinegar water mixture. Aspen shavings can be replaced once a month, as long as feces are spot cleaned when the animal defecates. Fresh water should be offered every day and the water dish should be sanitized once a week.

Safe Handling of Reptiles*: As with all living creatures, reptiles can carry microorganisms (including Salmonella) which can make people ill. To reduce the chances of infection, always follow these safe handling steps:

- Always wash your hands thoroughly after you handle your pet, its food and anything it has touched.
- Keep your pet in a habitat designed for it; do not let your pet reptile roam around the home without proper supervision.
- Keep your pet, its food dishes and cage components out of the kitchen.
- Don't nuzzle or kiss your pet.
- Infants, children under 5 years of age, pregnant women, the elderly, and those with a compromised immune system have a greater risk of infection. Extra caution should be taken when they are in contact with any animal. Children under 5 should handle reptiles only under adult/parent supervision.

Recommended Books: *Pythons – Reptile Keeper Guide* (Barron's books).

Recommended Supplies:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Glass terrarium (long is best) | <input type="checkbox"/> Reptile carpet/newsprint/aspen shavings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Screen top with lock (if not included with terrarium) | <input type="checkbox"/> Heat bulb & fixture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CaveX2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Feeder mice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Misting bottle | <input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water dish | <input type="checkbox"/> Hygrometer |

Your New Pet: It is the responsibility of any pet owner to provide their pet with regular veterinary care to maintain their pet's health and to prevent illness.

Should you experience any problems with your new pet, contact Pisces Pet Emporium. We will make every effort to assist you but we may refer you to a qualified veterinarian if the problem is beyond our ability to treat.

A pet is a large responsibility and should not be purchased without due consideration. Pets should never be released into the wild.



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**Safe handling information courtesy of PIJAC Canada*