



## Pamper your Fin, Fur or Feathered Family

..and your friends with Scales

# Sand Boa

*Eryx Conicus*

**Lifespan:** 30 years.

**Size:** Adults can reach 2 to 4 feet in length.

**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:** Sand Boas do best in a longer tank that provides them with room to roam around and exercise. A 20-gallon tank is adequate. For a baby or hatchling, a standard 10 gallon tank with screen top is good. A lock is required to prevent your snake from escaping. ***Pisces recommends: ExoTerra All-Glass Terrariums.***

**Hiding/Climbing Spots:** A snake cave or other hiding spot is recommended. Provide a water dish large enough for the snake to curl its entire body into for bathing and to help with shedding.

**Humidity:** The enclosure should be well ventilated and misted well to keep the humidity moderate (40% to 60%) and to aid the process of shedding and prevent health problems. A moss hide helps maintain an area with high humidity for when the snake is shedding. Use a hygrometer to maintain a constant humidity level.

**Substrate:** A thick layer of sand is the best substrate for sand boas, as they enjoy burrowing in the sand. ***Pisces recommends: Exo-Terra Desert Sand***

**Heat:** Maintain a temperature of 83°F to 85°F. Snakes cannot sustain all bodily functions if kept at a constant temperature. Use a heat bulb on one portion of the tank so the snake can escape the warm area if they need to. ***Pisces recommends: ExoTerra bulbs and fixtures.***

**UV Lighting:** Use of a full spectrum 5.0 bulb for 12 hours per day is recommended. Fluorescent bulbs lose effectiveness and need to be replaced every 6-8 months.

**Feeding:** Feed juveniles about once a week. Adults will eat about once every two weeks. Snakes will normally eat live prey, but they can be switched to frozen food. If you wish to feed frozen be sure that the food is thoroughly thawed before offering it to your snake. Feed prey approximately the maximum girth of the snake.

**Handling:** When handling a baby or juvenile Boa, it is best to pick them up confidently and slowly. To them, you are a much larger predator and if you hesitate or are nervous, it will induce fear in the snake. These are one of the more docile snakes and are calmer than most snakes but can still behave badly when they feel threatened (biting, striking). If this happens when you are handling your snake, put it back in its tank. Snakes can be head shy so avoid touching its head until you know it's comfortable.

**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:** *Boas* (Barron's Books).

**Recommended Supplies:**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Glass terrarium (long is best)</li> <li>❑ Screen top (if not included with terrarium)</li> <li>❑ Cave</li> <li>❑ Misting bottle</li> <li>❑ Water dish</li> <li>❑ Exo-Terra Desert Sand (yellow)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Heat Bulb &amp; Fixture</li> <li>❑ Fluorescent Light &amp; Fixture</li> <li>❑ Feeder Mice</li> <li>❑ Thermometer</li> <li>❑ Hygrometer</li> </ul> |
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**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.



4921 Skyline Way N.E.  
 Calgary, Alberta T2E 4G5  
 Phone: (403) 274-3314 Fax: (403) 275-6296  
[www.piscespets.com](http://www.piscespets.com)  
 Email: [pisces@piscespets.com](mailto:pisces@piscespets.com)

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*\*Safe handling information courtesy of PIJAC Canada*