



## Husbandry Handbook

# ROSY BOA

*Lichanura trivirgata*

### Geographical Variation

Rosy Boas are one of two species of boidae in the United States, the other being the Rubber Boa. One very unique characteristic of Rosy Boas is that their color and patterns vary greatly depending on where they live. Most have lateral striping in two different colors but a few have a reticulated granite pattern. Many experts can tell exactly where the snake came from just based on its coloration and pattern. Around Morongo Valley, CA, they are striped with bright orange and blue/grey but in the Maricopa Mountains of AZ they are striped with deep brown and cream white. There is another beautiful variant around Otay Lake in CA. These boas have a granite pattern of black, dark orange, and blue/grey. When choosing a Rosy Boa as a new pet, research all of the different localities and variations so you can find the one that's right for you.

### Habitat

Rosy Boas are native to the southwestern United States in both California and Arizona, and the northwestern Mexican states of Baja California and Sonora. They are found in both the Colorado and Mojave deserts and coastal areas around Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Diego counties. They spend most of their time hiding beneath rocks and in crevices. This way they can avoid the extreme heat of the desert as well as potential predators. The majority of their environment is granite outcroppings and areas with plenty of rocks to hide under.



### Housing

Housing must be sealed and escape proof. Hatchling Rosy Boas can be housed in a 10 gallon Zilla® Critter Cage® product. Adults will require a minimum of a 20L Zilla® Critter Cage® product. While Rosy Boas can reach a length of 36", they are terrestrial and don't need a tall tank. Provide Rosy Boas with substrates that enable burrowing such as Zilla® Lizard Litter. Decorate the tank with driftwood, rocks, logs and other décor for ample basking and hiding opportunities.

### Temperature and Humidity

It is important to create a thermal gradient (or a warm side) in the cage/ enclosure. This can be done with an appropriate sized Zilla® Heat Mat adhered to the bottom of the tank on one side. Ideal temperatures for Rosy Boas range from 65-75°F on the cool side and 80-85°F on the warm side. Provide a basking area on the warm side around 90-95°F. Using a Zilla® Mini Heat & UVB Fixture with a Zilla® 50W Mini Halogen bulb and a Zilla® Desert Mini Compact Fluorescent UVB Bulb will provide the correct heat and UV for your Rosy Boa to thrive. While Rosy Boas don't need UVB to survive, UVA/UVB light has been shown to support the immune system, health and wellness of all reptiles, including diurnal and crepuscular species. Make sure to place the light over the side with the heat mat to help create the thermal gradient. Humidity can be a problem for Rosy Boas so make sure to keep the humidity low. Provide a small water dish, and clean it up right away if it's spilled. You can even remove the water bowl and only make it available one day a week. Spot clean the enclosure for urates and feces once a week; every 3 months remove all substrate to clean and disinfect the tank and décor.

### Feeding/Diet

In the wild, rosy boas will prey upon rodents, other small mammals and small birds. Most neonates can be started off on pinky or hopper mice once per week. Food items can gradually increase in size and quantity as needed. Adult rosy boas can be fed adult mice once every 7-10 days. A general rule of thumb when feeding snakes is to provide prey items that are approximately the same width as the widest point of the snake. When possible, try to get the snake to eat frozen, thawed rodents. It's safer for the snake and easier to keep a larger quantity on hand for weekly feeding.

### Handling

Rosy Boas are quite placid and innocuous snakes and reluctant to bite under most circumstances. Handle your Rosy Boa gently and deliberately taking care not to drop the animal. Most Rosy Boas will become accustomed to handling and settle down considerably over time to become quite docile and personable.

*Be sure to wash your hands after handling any animals.*

