

DISTRICT PYTHONS

RETICULATED PYTHON CARE SHEET | *Malayopython reticulatus*

Reticulated Pythons are intelligent, active snakes known for their striking patterns and impressive size. They require secure housing, consistent husbandry, appropriate enrichment, and confident handling. Because adult size varies greatly by locality and genetics, owners should plan carefully for the animal's full-grown needs.

ENCLOSURE

Provide a strong, escape-proof enclosure that allows the snake to stretch out, turn comfortably, and explore. Enclosure size must increase as the animal grows and should be based on the snake's actual adult size rather than age alone. Large mainland Reticulated Pythons can require very substantial custom enclosures, while dwarf and super dwarf localities may remain smaller. Include secure hides, a sturdy water container, climbing opportunities, and enrichment.

TEMPERATURE

Provide a thermal gradient with a **warm area around 88-92°F** and a **cool side around 76-80°F**. Avoid excessive temperatures and use a reliable thermostat to control heating equipment. Monitor temperatures with accurate digital thermometers.

HUMIDITY

A general target of approximately **60-80% relative humidity** works well for many Reticulated Pythons, with attention to hydration and shedding. The enclosure should have adequate ventilation and should not remain constantly wet. Adjust humidity based on the individual animal and enclosure conditions.

SUBSTRATE

Coconut husk, cypress mulch, coconut fiber, and reptile-safe soil mixtures are common options. Choose a substrate that supports appropriate humidity without remaining waterlogged. Avoid aromatic woods such as **cedar and pine**. Spot-clean waste promptly and replace contaminated substrate when necessary.

FEEDING

Offer appropriately sized prey based on the snake's size, age, growth rate, and body condition. Young Reticulated Pythons generally eat more frequently than adults. As they mature, meals become larger and should usually be offered less often. Avoid power-feeding or excessive feeding. **Frozen/thawed prey is generally preferred** because live prey can injure snakes. Fresh water should always be available.

HANDLING & SAFETY

Reticulated Pythons are intelligent and can become accustomed to consistent, respectful handling. Allow new animals time to settle and feed reliably before frequent handling. Support the body and avoid handling immediately after feeding. As the snake becomes larger, use appropriate assistance and safe handling practices. Large constrictors should never be handled casually or without consideration for the animal's size and strength.

RETICULATED PYTHON CARE - CONTINUED

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ENRICHMENT

Reticulated Pythons are active and inquisitive. Provide opportunities to climb, explore, hide, and interact with different textures and enclosure features. A well-designed environment can encourage natural behavior while helping keep the animal physically and mentally engaged.

SHEDDING

Before shedding, the snake may appear dull and its eyes may become cloudy or bluish. Maintain proper hydration and humidity while minimizing unnecessary disturbance. After shedding, check carefully for retained skin, especially around the eyes and tail tip.

CLEANING & HYGIENE

Remove feces, urates, and heavily soiled substrate promptly. Clean and refill water containers regularly and perform deeper enclosure cleaning as needed. Wash your hands thoroughly after handling reptiles, waste, substrate, or enclosure equipment.

HEALTH

Monitor body condition, breathing, mouth, eyes, skin and scales, feeding behavior, waste, and activity. Wheezing, discharge or bubbles around the mouth or nose, persistent abnormal breathing, unexplained weight loss, injuries, unusual swelling, mites, or other concerning changes should be evaluated by a **qualified reptile/exotics veterinarian**.

LONG-TERM COMMITMENT

Reticulated Pythons can live **20+ years** with proper care and may become extremely large depending on locality, genetics, and sex. Before acquiring one, understand the expected adult size and be prepared for the enclosure space, feeding costs, equipment, handling requirements, and veterinary care the animal may need throughout its life.

THE DISTRICT PYTHONS STANDARD

Proper husbandry, responsible ownership, and safe handling come first.

This care sheet provides general husbandry guidance and is not a substitute for veterinary advice. Reticulated Python size and care requirements can vary significantly by locality, genetics, age, sex, health, and environment. Always research the specific animal you keep.