



HOGNOSE SNAKE

CARE GUIDE

THE NEW BEGINNING WAY

Hognose Snake Care Guide

Hognose snakes are fascinating reptiles known for their distinctive upturned snouts and charming behaviors. They make excellent pets for both novice and experienced snake enthusiasts due to their manageable size and relatively easy care requirements. This guide provides essential information on caring for these intriguing creatures.

Overview

Hognose snakes, particularly the Western Hognose (*Heterodon nasicus*), are popular in the pet trade. They are small, typically growing to a length of 1.5 to 3 feet, and have a lifespan of around 15 years when properly cared for. Their docile nature and unique defensive behaviors, such as playing dead, make them a favorite among snake lovers.

Housing

Enclosure

- **Size:** A 20-gallon terrarium is suitable for a single adult hognose snake. Ensure the enclosure has a secure lid to prevent escapes.
- **Substrate:** Use aspen shavings, cypress mulch, or a reptile carpet. Avoid substrates that can cause impaction, like sand or small gravel.
- **Hides:** Provide at least two hide boxes—one on the warm side and one on the cool side of the enclosure.
- **Decor:** Include branches, rocks, and artificial or real plants to mimic their natural environment and offer enrichment.

Temperature and Humidity

- **Temperature:** Maintain a temperature gradient of 75°F to 85°F, with a basking spot around 90°F.
- **Humidity:** Keep humidity levels between 30% and 50%. Ensure proper ventilation to prevent respiratory issues.

Lighting

- **Lighting:** Hognose snakes do not require special UVB lighting, but a regular light cycle of 12 hours light and 12 hours dark is beneficial.

Feeding

- **Diet:** Hognose snakes primarily eat rodents. Feed appropriately-sized prey, such as pinkies or fuzzies, depending on the snake's size.
- **Feeding Schedule:** Juveniles should be fed once every 4-5 days, while adults can be fed every 7-10 days.

- **Method:** Use tongs to offer prey and ensure it's fully thawed if frozen. Monitor feeding to ensure the snake is eating properly.

Handling and Behavior

- **Handling:** Hognose snakes are generally mild-mannered and can be handled regularly. Support their body and avoid sudden movements to prevent stress.
- **Behavior:** They are known for their dramatic defensive displays, such as flattening their necks and hissing. These behaviors are typically harmless and more of a bluff.

Health and Well-being

- **Signs of Good Health:** A healthy hognose snake will have clear eyes, smooth skin, and regular shedding patterns. They should be active and have a healthy appetite.
- **Common Health Issues:** Watch for signs of respiratory infections, such as wheezing or bubbles from the nose, and seek veterinary care if needed.

Conclusion

Hognose snakes are captivating pets that require specific care to thrive. By providing a suitable habitat, maintaining proper temperature and humidity, offering a nutritious diet, and handling them with care, you can ensure your hognose snake remains healthy and happy. Enjoy the rewarding experience of caring for these unique and charming reptiles!