herpy

SNAKES

Children's Python

Antaresia childreni

Antaresia childreni is a small, nocturnal python from northern Australia. It reaches 80-120 cm, is calm, hardy and eats willingly, which makes it one of the most suitable pythons for new snake keepers. It is long-lived and tolerates both dry and humid air, but it is a skilled escape artist.

Family: Pythonidae Former name: *Liasis childreni; Antaresia stimsoni*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**80-120 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**20-30 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Rock-dwelling and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Semi-desert, savanna and rocky terrain**
Difficulty	**Beginner**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**90 × 45 × 45 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-29 °C**
Basking spot	**32-35 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-24 °C**
Humidity	**20-80%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Recommended** Ferguson zone 2
Diet	**Vertebrates**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**18-36 months**
Clutch size	**8-12 eggs**
Incubation	**45-49 days** at 31 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	An adult *Antaresia childreni* needs an enclosure of at least 90 × 45 × 45 cm (length × width × height).
TEMPERATURE	The enclosure must have a distinct gradient. The basking spot and the warm hide must be 32-35 °C. The cool side must be 24-29 °C. At night the temperature must be 20-24 °C and must not stay below 20 °C for long.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	*A. childreni* is not fussy about humidity and tolerates 20-80 %. Shedding problems are most often caused by incorrect temperature, not humidity. Humidity is highest on the cool side and at night, and lowest by the heat.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is nocturnal, but it needs a fixed day-night rhythm. The light is switched on for 12 hours a day in summer and turned down to about 10 hours in winter, controlled by a timer.
FEEDING	*Antaresia childreni* eats mice and small rats of a size that suits the snake. Prey should be thawed and warmed to 32-38 °C in a bag in warm water. Use feeding tongs with soft tips, because the snake strikes hard.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*A. childreni* is calm and tolerates handling, but young animals are nervous and may bite or rear up and strike. They get used to handling.
NATIVE RANGE	Australia.