herpy

SNAKES

Spotted Python

Antaresia maculosa

Antaresia maculosa is a small, nocturnal python from the east coast of Australia. It usually reaches 90-130 cm, is calm and hardy, feeds readily and is among the best-suited pythons for new snake keepers. The pattern is dark, ragged-edged blotches on a light brown ground. It is good at escaping from enclosures that are not completely secure.

Family: Pythonidae Former name: *Liasis maculosus; Antaresia maculosus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**90-130 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**20-30 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Savanna, rainforest 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	**6-15 eggs**
Incubation	**50-60 days** at 31-32 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

Antaresia maculosa is kept like its close relatives *Antaresia childreni* and *Antaresia stimsoni*, which have the same way of life and requirements. A few figures, especially for breeding, are borrowed from them.

TEMPERATURE

The enclosure must have a clear 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 periods.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

A. maculosa is not fussy about humidity and tolerates 20-80 %. Poor sheds are usually caused by the wrong temperature, not the wrong humidity. Humidity is highest on the cool side and at night and lowest at the heat.

LIGHTING AND UVB

The species is nocturnal but needs a fixed day-night rhythm. The light is on for 12 hours a day in summer and reduced to about 10 hours in winter, controlled by a timer.

FEEDING

Antaresia maculosa eats mice and small rats of a size that suits the snake. The prey must 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. maculosa is calm, has a strong feeding response and tolerates handling well. Young animals are more nervous and may bite or rear up and strike, but they get used to handling.

NATIVE RANGE

Australia.