herpy

SNAKES

Pygmy Python

Antaresia perthensis

Antaresia perthensis is a nocturnal python from north-western Australia and the smallest python in the world. It reaches 40-60 cm and weighs about 200 g as an adult. It is calm and needs a small but fully escape-proof enclosure. The hardest part is getting the very small young to eat mice, because in the wild they feed on small lizards.

Family: Pythonidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**40-60 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**20-30 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Rock-dwelling and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Semi-desert and rocky terrain**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 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**
Clutch size	**5-8 eggs**
Incubation	**50-60 days** at 31 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Little is known about the care of *Antaresia perthensis* specifically.
TEMPERATURE	The enclosure needs a clear gradient. The basking spot and the warm hide should be 32-35 °C. The cool side should be 24-29 °C. At night the temperature should be 20-24 °C and should not stay below 20 °C for long.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	*A. perthensis* is not fussy about humidity and tolerates 20-80 %. Humidity is highest on the cool side and at night, and lowest by the heat. Shedding problems are most often caused by incorrect temperature.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is nocturnal, but it 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 perthensis* is so small that its food must be chosen with care. Adults take small mice, for example pinkies and fuzzies, and large prey puts a strain on the snake even if it tries to eat it.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*A. perthensis* is calm and tolerates handling, but young animals can be nervous and bite. Most get used to handling. Leave a new snake in peace for about two weeks, and begin handling it only once it is feeding regularly.
NATIVE RANGE	Australia.