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SNAKES

Brown House Snake

Boaedon capensis

Boaedon capensis is a slender, nocturnal constrictor from southern Africa, where it lives in scrub, grassland and around human dwellings and hunts rodents and lizards. In the enclosure it is hardy and simple to keep, and adults usually become calm in the hand, but the species is a skilled escape artist, and juveniles are fast.

Family: Lamprophiidae Former name: *Lamprophis capensis; Boaedon capense*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**60-120 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**10-20 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Semi-desert and savanna**
Difficulty	**Beginner**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**90 × 45 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-28 °C**
Basking spot	**30-32 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-24 °C**
Humidity	**40-60%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Optional**
Diet	**Vertebrates**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Clutch size	**5-16 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-4**
Incubation	**55-65 days** at 29-30 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Not listed**
EU annex	**Not listed**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

An adult *B. capensis* needs an enclosure of at least 90 × 45 × 40 cm. Larger is always better, and large females do well in 100 × 50 × 40 cm.

TEMPERATURE

The enclosure must have a clear temperature gradient. During the day it is 24-28 °C, with about 24 °C at the cool end. The warmest spot, where the snake can lie and warm itself, should be 30-32 °C.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

Humidity should be 40-60%. In most rooms this is achieved with a water bowl, and it is rarely necessary to mist.

LIGHTING AND UVB

B. capensis is nocturnal and does not need bright light. A fixed light rhythm of about 12 hours of light and 12 hours of dark all year round gives a clear daily rhythm. UVB is not necessary for animals that are fed whole prey.

FEEDING

Boaedon capensis kills its prey by constriction, has a strong feeding response and usually eats readily. It is fed whole, thawed mice and, for large females, small rats, never live prey.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Juveniles and subadults can be fast, nippy and restless, and they can spring out of the enclosure like a released spring when the lid is opened. Open the lid carefully over a safe spot.

NATIVE RANGE

South Africa, Lesotho, Eswatini, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Zambia and Malawi.