
Rosy Boa

(*Lichanura trivirgata*)

Class: *Reptilia*

Order: *Squamata*

Family: *Boidae*

Characteristics:

They are one of the smallest boas, measuring 22–35 inches (2-3 feet) in length. They are quite stocky and have small heads. They can be beige, blue or rose colored with three lengthwise gray, tan or reddish brown stripes, and the underside is creamy or gray with black flecks.

Behavior:

Adults are fairly docile and rarely bite. Babies/juveniles are more skittish and might try to bite if they feel threatened. They are mostly active at night and prefer to spend their days sleeping in burrows. Rosy boas generally brumate (hibernate) during the winter, and are active during the spring, summer, and fall. Mostly come out to breed but also come out to find prey and new territory.

Reproduction:

Young males and females usually reach reproductive maturity at 2-3 years of age and can live 18-22 years. Rosy boas have a polygynandrous mating system in which both males and females have multiple partners over the course of each reproductive season. These snakes are ovoviviparous (eggs hatch in mom's body) and give birth to fully-developed live young. Their breeding season occurs from May through July and the gestation period lasts around 103-143 days. Females give birth to about 6 snakelets in a brood; babies are typically about 1 foot long and are independent immediately.

Diet:

Wild: Pack rats, baby rabbits, deer mice, and kangaroo rats make up a large portion of their diet.

Zoo: Domestic Mice

Conservation:

They are an SSP species. They are protected but many are still illegally caught for the pet trade.

FYI:

Rosy boas are one of the slowest-moving snakes in the world (up to 1mph on open ground). They are unable to pursue prey and must either wait in ambush or stalk its meals. When a meal is within reach, usually a few inches, a rosy boa strikes with surprising speed and accuracy.



Range & Habitat:

Rosy Boas are found in the Southwestern US and north west Mexico. In the US, they are found in southern California, Colorado, and Arizona.



Lifespan: Up to 30 or more years in captivity and 20 years in the wild.

Special Adaptations: To protect itself from predators, the Rosy Boa rolls itself into a ball with its head in the center and then releasing a foul-smelling musk from a gland in its tail.

IUCN Conservation Status:

Least Concern

