

Ball Python

Scientific Name: *Python regius*

Class: Reptilia

Order: Squamata

Family: Pythonidae



Ball pythons are a nonvenomous constrictor. They are the smallest of the African pythons, popular in the pet trade and have a docile temperament. The males can be up to six feet with the females being slightly larger. They are stocky and have smooth scales. The color pattern is typically black or dark brown with lighter side and dorsal blotches. The belly is white or cream and may include scattered black markings.

Range

Sub-Saharan Africa

Habitat

Prefer grasslands, savannas, and sparsely wooded areas.

Gestation

55 – 60 days

Litter

3-11 large, leathery eggs

Behavior

Terrestrial species known for its defense strategy that involves coiling into a tight ball with head and neck tucked into the middle. Wild-caught specimens have greater difficulty adapting to a captive environment, which can result in refusal to feed, and they generally carry internal or external parasites.

Reproduction

Sexual maturity is reached at 11-18 months for males, and 20-36 months for females. Parental care of the eggs ends once they hatch, and the female leaves the offspring to fend for themselves.

Wild Diet

Wild diet consists mostly of small mammals, such as African soft-furred rats, shrews, gerbils and striped mice and birds.