

Burmese Python

Scientific Name: *Python bivittatus*

Class: Reptilia

Order: Squamata

Family: Pythonidae



The Burmese python is one of the five largest species of snakes in the world. Burmese pythons are dark-colored snakes with many brown blotches bordered in black down the back. The female is slightly larger and heavier than the male. The Burmese python is considered an invasive species in the United States, specifically in southern Florida. Decreasing numbers of foxes, rabbits, raccoons, opossums, deer, birds and coyote have been noted in the last five years.

Range

Burmese pythons are native to tropical South and Southeast Asia.

Habitat

Often found near water and sometimes semi-aquatic they can also be found in trees. Wild pythons average twelve feet long but have been known to reach eighteen feet. They are excellent swimmers and need a permanent source of water. They can be found in grasslands, marshes, swamps, rocky foothills, woodlands, river valleys, and jungles with open clearings.

Gestation

No information is given on how long the gestation of the eggs is, but the adult stays with them until they use their egg tooth to cut themselves open from the egg. However, the newly hatched often remain inside their eggs until they are ready to complete their first shedding of skin, after which they hunt for their first meal.

Litter

Clutch is between 12 – 36 eggs in March or April

Behavior

Burmese pythons are mainly nocturnal rainforest dwellers. They are good climbers and have prehensile tails. Younger pythons will go to the trees, but as they age and get larger they tend to stay on the forest floor. Being excellent swimmers, pythons can stay submerged for up to half an hour. They are known to be easygoing or timid creatures.

Reproduction

Breed in early spring and the eggs are only cared for until the young break through the shells.

Wild Diet

The Burmese pythons are carnivorous. They will consume any mammal presented to them as they are opportunistic feeders and will act hungry even if just fed.