



# Amazing Animals Fact sheets

## Boas and Pythons

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Boas and Pythons are non-venomous snakes that constrict their prey (ie. wrap it in tight coils). Pythons kill their prey by squeezing (constricting) them in tight coils. Their diet mainly consists of birds and mammals. The Reticulated Python is one of the largest snakes in the world, and can reach lengths of over 8m. They are common throughout parts of South-east Asia.



### Carpet Pythons

This beautiful non-venomous python's thick body has patterns which are blotchy yellow and black. This species of python is a very familiar face for locals who live near Australia Zoo. The carpet python may grow to reach lengths of up to 3.5 metres. It is usually active at night and spends most of the day coiled up in a tree or rafter, or stretched out basking in an open area.

#### Habitat

Carpet pythons can be found in habitats ranging from tropical rainforest in the north-east of Australia to arid and coastal regions. Pythons from different habitats tend to have their own unique colouration. The species is currently divided into six distinct subspecies. The local subspecies that can be seen around Australia Zoo is *Morelia spilota mcdowelli*.

#### Diet

Carpet pythons can normally be seen feeding after dark. They primarily eat mammals and birds, although smaller pythons prefer to eat lizards. Often encountered in suburban areas, you couldn't find a better rat catcher. Like most pythons, the carpet python has heat sensitive pits on their upper and lower lips, which help them detect the body heat of their prey.

#### Breeding

Once the female carpet python lays her eggs, she will coil around her eggs, occasionally shivering to maintain temperatures at an optimum level for embryo development (approximately 30°C).