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Corn Snake Care Sheet

Background

- Pantherophis Guttatus
- Native to Southeastern United States
- When newly hatched, corn snakes can measure anywhere between 25-38 cm (10-15"), but they grow to be about 0.9-1.5 m (3-5') as adults.
- Life expectancy up to 15-25 years in captivity
- Crepuscular most active at night
- Solitary animals except during mating

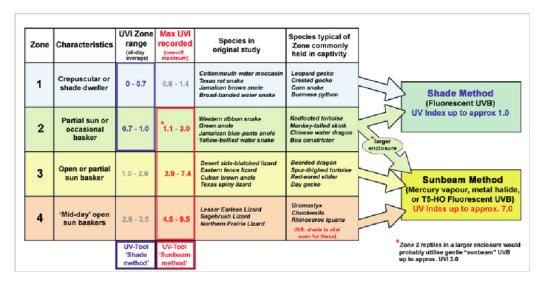
Housing

- Vivarium's are ideal to maintain temperature and humidity
- Minimum guidelines suggest the length and width of the vivarium should be equal to the length of the snake fully stretched out.
 - o The larger the enclosure the better
 - The minimum vivarium size recommended by Apex vets is at least 120 x 60 x 60cm (48"L x 24"W x 24"H)
 - Corn snakes like to climb so provided good height and climbable furniture is recommended
- Substrates:
 - o Bioactive enclosures
 - Cypress mulch/coco coir/top soil
 - Newspaper (as quarantine/hospital bedding)
- Spot clean enclosure regularly
- Replace substrate every few months
- Provide multiple hides
 - o Hot and cold ends
 - o Large enough for snake to curl up
 - Fake/real plants can be used to provide cover and reduce stress
- Provide lots of climbing areas as well
- Humidity in the enclosure should be around 65-75%, this is based on the average humidity in their natural habitat in America
- Offering a humid hide as well can help with shedding

Lighting and Heating

- Lighting
 - Although they are crepuscular it is still recommended to provide light within the enclosure to mimic a normal day/night cycle
 - Provide a light source to simulate daytime hours can help with the mental health of your snake
 - o Standard times are usually 12 hours on and 12 hours off

- UV lighting
 - UVA is visible to reptiles
 - UVB is required for healthy metabolism and synthesis of vitamin D3
 - UVB is essential to keep a reptile healthy in captivity, UVA isn't medically necessary but can help with pets wellbeing
 - The length of time of which visible light is received in a day is referred to as "photoperiod" – incorrect photoperiods have been shown to cause reproductive disease, obesity and dietary problems
 - If a reptile is being supplemented with dietary calcium but no UVB light then it will be unable to absorb this calcium and cannot use it
- Deciding what light to get



- Corn snakes fit in to Ferguson Zone 1 and 2
- This means the ideal UVB lamb are 5-10% tubular bulbs used with a reflector.
- Ideal temperatures:
 - o Basking 31°C (88°F)
 - o Ambient day temperature 24-26°C (75-79°F)
 - Ambient night temperature 20°C (72°F)
- Heat can be provided by multiple methods and all should be used with a thermostat
 - Heat mats
 - o Basking bulb
 - Ceramic heat emitter
- Heat mats can struggle to penetrate through the bedding
- Wattage of lamp is based on size of enclosure and the power needed to heat to the appropriate temperatures

Diet

- Usually fed on rodents
- Ideal size is the same width as 1.5x the size of the snakes head
- Hatchlings should be fed pinkies every 7 days
- Chicks and quail eggs can be used to add variety to diet but should not be relied on for 100% of the diet

- DO NOT FEED LIVE FOOD
- Avoid handling for 48 hours after feeding
- Watch for weight gain, obesity is a common problem in pet snakes
- Can also dust prey items with calcium or D3 powder to help fill in any gaps in the diet

General Care Tips

- Monitor snakes weight and when it sheds its skin
- Should shed their skin in one go
- Handle with care when snake is in blue (about to shed) they are more likely to bite during this time
- Increased humidity in the vivarium or a humid hide can help with shedding