

Hognose Care Sheet

Background

- Heterodon (North American Hognose)
- Rear fanged snake which can cause a reaction if bitten (similar to a bee sting)
- Females can reach up to 4ft in length, males a bit smaller
- Life expectancy up to 15-20 years in captivity
- 3 different sub-species
 - Eastern (Heterodon platirhinos)
 - Western (Heterodon nasicus)
 - Southern (Heterodon simus)
- Diurnal – require daylight hours
- Solitary animals except during mating

Housing

- Vivariums 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.
 - The larger the enclosure the better
 - **Hatchlings** under 6" (16 cm) long can be housed in a 40x20x25 cm or 16"x8"x10".
 - **Juveniles** can be housed in a 50x28x33 cm or 20"x10"x12" until they are 1 year old.
 - **Adult males** can be housed in a minimum 76x33x33 cm or 30"x13"x13" enclosure.
 - For **Easterns** and **adult female Westerns**, 90x45x40 cm or 36"x18"x16" is a more appropriate minimum.
- Burrowing species so deep bedding preferred (8-12cm of depth)
- Substrates:
 - Bioactive enclosures
 - Aspen shavings
 - Newspaper (deep or as quarantine/hospital bedding)
 - Carefresh bedding
- Spot clean enclosure regularly
- Provide multiple hides
 - Hot and cold ends
 - Large enough for snake to curl up
 - Fake plants can be used to provide cover and reduce stress
- Provide lots of climbing areas as well
- Humidity in the enclosure should be around 30%, eastern and southern hognoses can tolerate up to 50%.
- Offering a humid hide as well can help with shedding

Lighting and Heating

- Lighting

- Diurnal species so awake during daylight hours
- Provide a light source to simulate daytime hours can help with the mental health of your hognose
- 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

Zone	Characteristics	UVI Zone range (all-day average)	Max UVI recorded (one-off maximum)	Species in original study	Species typical of Zone commonly held in captivity
1	Crepuscular or shade dweller	0 - 0.7	0.6 - 1.4	Cottonmouth water moccasin Texas rat snake Jamaican brown anole Broad-banded water snake	Leopard gecko Crested gecko Corn snake Burmese python
2	Partial sun or occasional basker	0.7 - 1.0	* 1.1 - 3.0	Western ribbon snake Green anole Jamaican blue-pants anole Yellow-bellied water snake	Redfooted tortoise Monkey-tailed skink Chinese water dragon Boa constrictor
3	Open or partial sun basker	1.0 - 2.6	2.9 - 7.4	Desert side-blotched lizard Eastern fence lizard Cuban brown anole Texas spiny lizard	Bearded dragon Spur-thighed tortoise Red-eared slider Day gecko
4	'Mid-day' open sun baskers	2.6 - 3.5	4.5 - 9.5	Lesser Earless Lizard Sagebrush Lizard Northern Prairie Lizard	Uromastyx Chuckwalla Rhinoceros iguana (NB: shade is vital even for these)

Shade Method
(Fluorescent UVB)
UV Index up to approx 1.0

Sunbeam Method
(Mercury vapour, metal halide, or T5-HO Fluorescent UVB)
UV Index up to approx. 7.0

* Zone 2 reptiles in a larger enclosure would probably utilise gentle "sunbeam" UVB up to approx. UVI 3.0

- Hognose snakes fit in to Ferguson Zone 2
- This means the ideal UVB lamps are 5-10% tubular bulbs used with a reflector
- Ideal temperature gradient should be 20-22°C to 30-32°C
- Heat can be provided by multiple methods and all should be used with a thermostat
 - Heat mats
 - Basking bulb
 - Ceramic heat emitter
- Heat mats can struggle to penetrate through the deep bedding required for hognoses
- 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
- Older snakes should be fed 2 adult mice every 7-14 days
- Very large adults should be fed up to 2 adult mice per feed

- 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