



Ball Python *Python regius*

Description: Ball Pythons are the smallest species of African pythons. Adults average 3-5 feet in length. Their coloration is light brown with distinctive gold-yellow blotches and markings. Many color variations have been developed by hobbyists but are not usually found in the wild.

Range: Ball pythons are native to Western and Central Africa.

Habitat: They prefer to live in savannas and rainforest where they can be easily camouflaged.

Life Span: Most pythons have a life span of 20-40 years.

Natural Diet: In the wild, they eat small mammals, other reptiles, and birds.

Zoo Diet: At the Zoo they receive rodents once a week.

Behavior: Ball pythons have a tendency when stressed or frightened to curl into a tight ball with its head hidden inside; they tend to lose this behavior in captivity. They can be either arboreal (tree dwelling) or ground dwelling, spending their day hiding in burrows and under rocks.

Reproduction: Clutches of 2-10 eggs are laid usually mid September to mid November which hatch in approximately 60 days.

Fun Facts:

Also called the Royal Python. Legend has it that Cleopatra wore a young ball python around her wrist thus leading to the species name "*regius*".

Conservation Status: High, stable population