

## Hog Island Boa

Hog island boas are best kept by people with some experience of keeping snakes. They are considered as a dwarf boa because they do not reach the lengths of other boas as they are a part of the sub species imperator. Generally they are nocturnal and are quite docile snakes. They may be slightly temperamental at times but are not dangerous. It is also best to house snakes alone. Low night time temperatures can cause snakes to hibernate.

Other names include the hogg island boa, hog island or hog isle boa.



## Glossary

**Reptile** - A cold-blooded vertebrate with scaly skin.

**Amphibian** - A cold-blooded vertebrate that begins life as an aquatic animal and grows into a terrestrial adult with lungs.

**Terrestrial** - A ground dwelling animal.

**Arboreal** - An animal that lives in trees.

**Diurnal** - Awake in the day.

**Nocturnal** - Awake during the night.

**UVB** - Ultraviolet radiation.

**Colubrid** - A family of snakes.

**Hybrid** - Offspring from animals of different species.

**Morph** - Colourations created due to genetics.

**Musk** - Unpleasant odour released when an animal is stressed or feels threatened.

### Live plants are only available on special order

If you require any further information, please ask our pet care advisors who will be very happy to help.

### Opening Times

Monday - Saturday: 9am - 6pm

Sunday: 9.30am - 4pm

### Chessington Garden Centre

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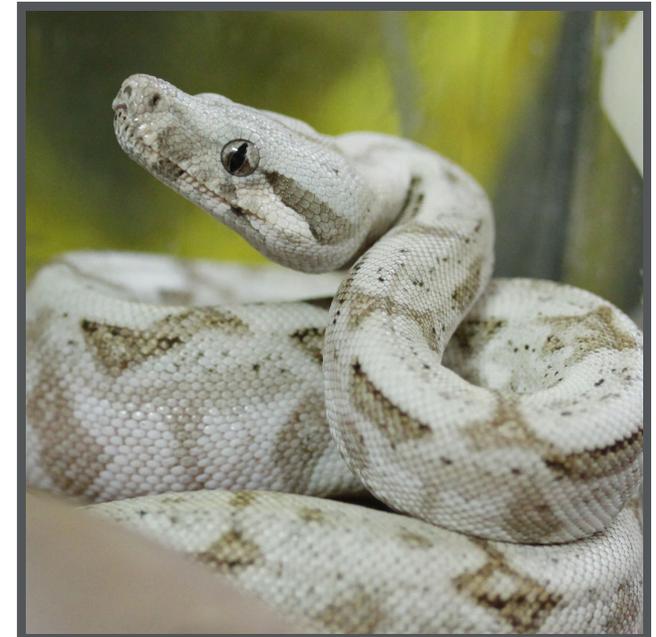
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**Chessington**

# Hog Island Boa



## Care & Advice Sheet

Inspiration for your Home & Garden

## Size & Housing

These snakes will become fairly large bodied but do not get as large as other boas. They rarely exceed lengths of 5ft but can reach up to 6ft in length. They are best housed in wooden vivariums as they maintain the heat better than glass terrariums. We recommend:  
4ft x 2ft x 1.5ft – Minimum for 1 Adult



## Substrate & Furnishings

Different substrates can be used for hog island boas. For ease of cleaning, newspaper or paper towels can be used but must be changed when soiled. Other substrates include beech chips, corn cob granules or aspen.

There should be plenty of places for the snake to hide. Provide hides (such as caves) in at least both sides of the enclosure so they have a hot and a cold hide to allow the snake to regulate their body temperature. With lots of hides in the enclosure the snake is likely to feel more secure. They can be very active snakes and will appreciate branches and ledges. Artificial plants can be used for decoration. Spot pick the enclosure daily and full clean once or twice a month using a reptile specific disinfectant.

## Handling

Hog island boas are generally happy with handling. Their general movement is quite slow as they are large bodied snakes. Whenever handling, provide support with both hands to the body and avoid getting too close to their head. These snakes are generally all bark and no bite. They may hiss if they feel threatened or are uncomfortable. Usually if they strike, it is only a hit with their head rather than an attempt to bite. Allow the snake to calm down if this happens. Handling little and often is always best.

## Lighting & Temperature

UVB is not needed as they are nocturnal but you can light up the vivarium with a low percentage UVB if you wish for 10–12 hours a day. This is best controlled by a timer. They require a basking area with a temperature around 35°C – this is best achieved this by using a heat bulb or ceramic heat emitter with a guard controlled by a thermostat at all times. There should be a temperature gradient across the enclosure with a cool end dropping by a few degrees. The temperature can fall to 24°C at night.

We do not recommend the use of heat mats with adult boas due to the risk of burns. They can also damage the mats when they become large bodied which creates problems with the heating.

## Food & Water

Fresh water should be provided daily in a large bowl. Humidity should be kept between 40–60% but if the snake has issues shedding, provide a moist hide with moss. Juvenile snakes should be fed once a week. Adults should be fed every 1–2 weeks as their metabolism slows down with age. Snakes may not feed if they are due to shed. Boas can generally manage food items that are slightly larger than the largest part of the body. Offer rodents such as:

- Mice
- Rats

Some snakes will have a preference and may only eat mice but not rats, or vice versa. Be aware that rats are much fatter than mice so it is essential to keep an eye on the overall body condition of your snake. They may go off of their food in colder months.

Defrost the mice or rats for a few hours before feeding and use warm water to warm the rodent up if needed. Tongs should be used to feed the snake as they may miss the food. This is the main chance to be bitten. It is recommended to feed the snake in a separate container.

**Do not handle the snake for 24–48 hours after feeding as this can cause the snake to regurgitate the food.**