



Columbian Red-Tailed Boa

Boa constrictor



Red

I was born August 4th, 2005.

I used to be one of the Racine Zoo's educational ambassador animals, but as I got older, I decided going on programs wasn't for me and I wanted a little more time by myself. You can find me enjoying my retirement over in my home at Walkabout Creek!

RED-TAILED BOAS AT A GLANCE



- Unlike most snakes which have only one lung, boas have a smaller, nonfunctional left lung and enlarged right lung to fit their long shape.
- Snakes have no eyelids but have a clear scale over each eye for protection, called a spectacle.
- Though albino boas are rare in the wild, albinism and other color morphs are popular in the pet trade.
- The red-tailed boa has vestigial hind limbs which are known as spurs.
- Boas can detect their prey using heat-sensing located on their face. This adaptation allows them to hunt at night as they are a nocturnal species.

Male:
6-8 ft
20-60 lbs

Female:
7-9 ft
20-60 lbs



Avg. life expectancy in native habitats:
20-30 years

Avg. life expectancy in human care:
25-40 years

WHERE ARE RED-TAILED NATIVE HABITATS LOCATED?



Colombian red-tailed boas inhabit a wide range from northern Mexico through Central and South America. They are commonly found in a wide range of habitats such as rainforests, woodlands, grasslands, dry tropical forests, thorn scrub, and semi-deserts.

Red-Tailed Boa Behaviors

SLEEPING

Boa constrictors are nocturnal animals, meaning they are most active and hunt during the night. However, they will lay out and bask in the sun during the daytime.

You can typically see me basking under my heat lamp while I sleep.



EATING

Boas are non-venomous. They kill their prey by constriction, wrapping their bodies around it and squeezing until the prey asphyxiates.

Even though I only eat frozen food that's thawed out, I still do this behavior at the zoo to help me swallow my food!



SMELLING

Their tongues flick continuously, bringing odor molecules into contact with the chemosensory organ in the top of their mouths.

Not only can I use my tongue to taste, it can help me smell my environment!



SHEDDING

Snakes periodically shed their skin to grow bigger. During this time, they usually go inactive till the shedding process is complete.

The shedding process can be quite stressful for me! During this time my keepers make sure to take special care of me.



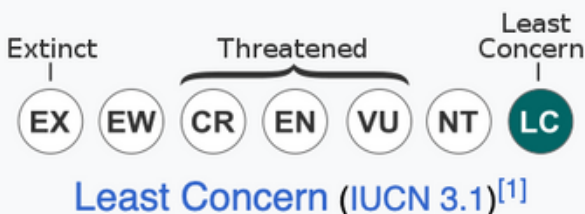
- Boa constrictors have good vision, even into the ultraviolet spectrum. In addition, they can detect both vibrations in the ground and sound vibrations through the air.
- Female boas incubate eggs inside their bodies and give live birth of up to 60 live babies.
- Boa constrictors spend equal amounts of time in trees and on the ground. Juveniles tend to be more arboreal than their adult counterparts.
- The boa's loosely hinged jaws can be stretched far apart, enabling it to swallow animals with bodies much larger in diameter than the boa's head.

Red-Tailed Boa Conservation

Predators like boa constrictors are very important to their environments. Predators disperse rich nutrients and influence the structure of ecosystems by regulating the food chain.

Red-Tailed Boas are currently listed as **least concern**. Boas are often killed for their meat and skins. They are also over-collected for the pet trade. Additional threats include habitat loss and road mortality.

Conservation status



How can we help?

Wild boa constrictors are often hunted for their skins and meat. Do not purchase products made of snakeskin and help others make responsible purchasing decisions, too!

You can help wild snake populations by not using rodenticide products (rat or mouse poison) that they could accidentally ingest.