



# Woma Pythons

*Aspidites ramsayi*

INTERMEDIATE · 4.5–5.5 FT ADULT · 20–30 YR LIFESPAN · NOCTURNAL · AUSTRALIA

The desert python that eats other snakes. Womas come out of Australia's dry country, they hunt at night down other animals' burrows, and they finish at around five feet of smooth, banded muscle. They are famously calm with people and famously keen on food, and that second half is the honest headline. A woma's feeding response is the thing you build your husbandry around.

| AT A GLANCE     |                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Difficulty      | Intermediate             |
| Ambient temp    | 80–85 °F                 |
| Night temp      | 72–78 °F                 |
| Basking surface | 90–95 °F                 |
| Humidity        | 40–50%                   |
| UVB             | Low output, beneficial   |
| Diet & cadence  | Rodents every 10–14 days |
| Adult size      | 4.5–5.5 ft               |
| Lifespan        | 20–30 years              |



Captive-bred womas are a regular sight on NARBC breeder tables, and the keepers behind them will talk desert setups all day.

Photo: Brian Gratwicke / Wikimedia Commons · CC BY 2.0

## 01

### Calm Snake, Loud Appetite

Womas are genuinely docile snakes with alarming table manners. Keepers describe the same slow headbob, a searching sway that means the animal has switched into food mode and is hunting for something to grab. It isn't aggression. It's a burrow hunter's strategy, and it doesn't switch off because the hand at the door belongs to you. Hook first, every time. The intermediate rating on this species is about that response, not about the setup.

## 02

### Floor Space Beats Height

Womas are ground animals. Every stage in the table wants floor space over height, from a 20×12×12 for a hatchling to a 60×24×18 for a full-grown adult. Racks suit young animals when ventilation and heat are right, but a grown woma does better in a front-opening enclosure with two hides and a lid that locks. One rule here has no exceptions. **Never house a woma with another snake.** Wild womas hunt and eat snakes, and a cagemate reads as food.

| STAGE     | MINIMUM  | PREFERRED | NOTES                                                                  |
|-----------|----------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Hatchling | 20×12×12 | 24×18×12  | Ophiophagous from day one. Never house with another snake, ever.       |
| Juvenile  | 24×18×12 | 36×18×18  | Strong feeders. Hook-train early so hands never read as dinner.        |
| Subadult  | 36×18×18 | 48×24×18  | Moderate growth. Upsize on girth and behavior, not on a calendar.      |
| Adult     | 48×24×18 | 60×24×18  | Around five feet of desert python. Dry setup, floor space over height. |

Enclosure sizes from Habitat-OS life-stage guidance. Minimums are floors, not goals, and floor space matters more than height for this species.

03

## Heat, Light, and the Night Drop

Build a real gradient. Ambient air sits at 80–85 °F with a basking surface of 90–95 °F, and nights are allowed to fall to 72–78 °F. That drop is not neglect; it's what the desert night does. Every heat source runs through a thermostat. Heat rocks stay out of the enclosure entirely, because a single scorching spot under a heavy-bodied snake is how burns happen. UVB isn't required, but a low-output lamp is a real benefit and cheap to add.

04

## Dry Air, Clean Water

Womas want dry air. Aim for 40–50% relative humidity in an enclosure that feels arid rather than stuffy, and let cross-ventilation do most of that work. Keep a clean water bowl available at all times anyway, because a desert snake still drinks. If a shed comes off in pieces, offer a humid hide packed with damp moss for a few days instead of misting the whole setup. Chronic damp is how keepers buy respiratory infections.

05

## Substrate, Cover, and Clutter

Womas push and dig, so give them a dry particulate substrate deep enough to shove around: aspen, paper-based bedding, or a firm soil blend all work. Skip loose sand with young animals, since a mouthful taken during a strike is an impaction risk you never needed. Put a hide at each end of the gradient, one warm and one cool, then add a low branch and some clutter across the floor. A woma with cover explores instead of sulking under one hide.

06

## Feeding a Snake-Eater Rodents

In the wild these are snake hunters. In captivity they eat rodents, and they eat them well. An adult takes an appropriately sized mouse or rat every 10–14 days, and growing animals stay at the short end of that window on smaller prey. Frozen/thawed is the sane choice. The real risk here runs opposite to a fussy feeder. A woma that takes everything offered gets heavy quietly, so feed with long tongs, weigh the snake monthly, and let the scale set the portion.

07

## Health Red Flags

Refused meals matter here. Womas are reliable feeders, so a string of skipped offerings usually means something is off. Watch for open-mouth breathing, wheezing, or bubbling at the nostrils, the signs of a respiratory infection from a setup gone damp or cool. Check the belly scales too, for brown or reddish pitting after any wet spell. Any of those is a reptile-vet appointment, and bring a recent weight with you.

Husbandry data: Habitat-OS species library. Structure follows the NARBC show handout series. Every animal is an individual - when in doubt, ask the breeder at the table or a reptile veterinarian.