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Kingsnake



Adequate temperature		
	Hot spot	Cold spot
Day temperature	29 °C	26 °C
Night temperature	24 °C	21 °C

Main Features :

This snake has a nightlife. He finds himself geographically in northern Mexico, hence his name. In the juvenile specimen, you can find small white spots all along his body, which will disappear with the moults. Once an adult, he is all dressed in black! He keeps very well in captivity, but he tends to eat everything he finds in his territory. It is therefore important to pay attention to your fingers! Its life expectancy is between 12 and 20 years and its size between 70 cm and 160 cm.

Captivity:

The habitat of the Mexican king snake must measure at least 90 cm x 45 cm x 60 cm and be equipped with a heating system. The degree of humidity (40-60%) and the temperature (see the table above) must be carefully monitored to preserve the health of your snake. To maintain the proper temperature, a heating mat out of reach of the animal, can be used as well as a heat lamp not accessible for the latter. The carpet must be installed under the terrarium to avoid any direct contact. If the animal has access to the heating source, the risk of burns is close to 100%. A reptile does not feel the heat on its skin, it is only once it is too late that it feels the wound. In order to better control the humidity level and to maintain an adequate temperature, it is strongly recommended to buy a thermometer and a hygrometer to better control the variants. The ideal is to get a thermostat that will regulate the temperature itself, but it's important to make sure it always works, even after several years! Adding an easily cleanable surface (paper towel-everything, prelate, etc.) as a substrate is appropriate. A gravel or sand substrate is not recommended due to the risk of the animal ingesting this product, which can cause intestinal blockage. In this species, Aspen shaving is often used. On the other hand, do not feed the snake in its vivarium, in order to avoid that it ingests pieces.



Food:

The Mexican king snake is a strict carnivore! It is therefore obligatory to provide him with prey so that he can feed himself and satisfy his predatory instinct. In the wild, they feed on small mammals, small lizards, birds and small, sometimes venomous snakes. In domestic life, you can offer him mice, gerbils, etc. If your pet tolerates it, you can give the dead animals (from where you know the source) to minimize the risk of injury. For the king snake, you have to give 1-2 mice or a small rat once a week. Beware, the king snake is known for cannibalism if he is hungry ...



Frequent health problems:

- Infections: Infections can occur in the mouth (stomatitis), on the skin (bacterial or fungal) or in the form of abscess. This condition is often the cause of poor nutrition, excess moisture or poor hygiene.
- Parasites: A lizard can sometimes catch parasites in many ways, such as having been outside, being in a boarding house or pet store or coming from their live food (mice, insects, etc.). If the animal is not treated following the appearance of parasites, it could become anemic and die. Parasites feed on your pet's blood, where they can find the nutrients they need for survival.
- Moult problem: A reptile moults several times a year. The moult consists of a change of skin. The animal grows up and the scales become too tight on it. He develops new ones and the old ones have to leave. A moult problem occurs when the degree of humidity is not adequate. If your pet has difficulty moulting, do not pull on the molt. Give it a bath of lukewarm water instead.
- Obstruction: An uninformed owner may offer an oversized animal as a meal to his snake. The snake sometimes has eyes bigger than the belly and tries to eat its prey. That's when he may choke or have an intestinal block!
- Cloacal Prolapse: A cloacal prolapse is an externalization of part of the digestive system of your reptile. It is therefore possible to see part of the intestine of your reptile out its cloaca (opening that connects the anus and the reproductive system).

As with all animals, it is recommended that an examination be conducted after the purchase of a new reptile and an annual check is required. The annual exam helps prevent health problems that may occur and thus save the life of your pet. If in doubt, a visit to the veterinarian is required! A reptile, whatever it is, will hide its symptoms so as not to become an easy prey for predators (humans). At the slightest change in behavior, contact your veterinarian.

