



A forest treasure.

Green tree pythons are undoubtedly beautiful, but not always green as their name implies. Often seen perched high in a tree, these pythons vary in pattern and color depending on their geographical locale and are often considered a treasure in the herpetological world. While not difficult to maintain in captivity, these pythons do require a more specialized setup and as such, are best kept by an experienced hobbyist. For the best success, it's always best to purchase captive bred specimens.

Lifespan

With proper care, green tree pythons can be expected to live 15-20 years on average.

Size

Green tree pythons average an adult length of 3-5 feet but may exceed 6 feet.

Natural History

Green tree pythons are distributed throughout mainland New Guinea, its offshore islands, and in eastern Indonesia. It is a tropical species, inhabiting lowland rainforests. They are an arboreal species, spending most of their time in trees, and are nocturnal, becoming active at night.

Housing

Despite their slender appearance, green tree pythons are still heavy bodied snakes and should be housed in an enclosure that can be as simple or as elaborate as you want it to be, so long as it is comfortable and provides adequate space for vertical movement and proper thermal regulation. These snakes love to be up high and as such appreciate an enclosure that is both tall and wide. While hatchlings may be kept in a smaller enclosure, an enclosure size measuring a minimum of 36" wide, 24" tall, and 18-24" deep is recommended for an adult.

Lighting & Heating

To properly thermoregulate, reptiles must be provided with a healthy temperature gradient as is appropriate for each species. For green tree pythons, these nocturnal, tropical snakes enjoy consistent temperatures and relatively high humidity!

Provide your python with a basking temperature between 86-88F. The ambient temperature should remain between 75-80F, and never fall below 70F at night. Humidity should remain between 50-70%. The use of white incandescent basking bulbs/ceramic heat emitters and/or heating pads are perfect for generating appropriate basking and ambient temperatures. Never use heat rocks as these may burn your snake! Measure temperatures and humidity closely with digital thermometers/hygrometers at

both warm and cool ends of the enclosure; in this case, the top and bottom of your snake's enclosure. Measure basking temperatures with a temperature gun or a digital thermometer with a probe.

Although this species is nocturnal, these snakes can benefit from a low output UVB. Exposure to appropriate wavelengths of UV can provide a day/night cycle for your snake and display your snake in its best colors. Providing a low output UVB is recommended but is not necessary.

Substrates & Decor

A wide range of substrates are available for green tree pythons. While they may live in the trees most of the time, they do occasionally visit the ground and the correct substrate type will encourage healthy humidity levels. In other words, your python would thrive in a substrate that best mimics its natural habitat. Cypress mulch, orchid bark chips, coconut husk, reptisoils, or a mixture can be used with green tree pythons.



Green tree pythons enjoy occasional exploration, so long as they feel safe and secure! They need to be able to perch comfortably during the day and explore at night. The use of horizontally placed branches offer an area to perch where they assume a saddle-like arrangement to rest. Cork bark flats, cork rounds, flat pieces of driftwood, and leaf litter provide areas to hide and explore. Most artificial plants as well as live plants provide visual barriers and may boost humidity levels in the enclosure.

Offer your snake a water bowl and maintain proper humidity levels by misting the enclosure often, up to 4x a day.

Diet & Nutrition

Green tree pythons are carnivores, meaning they primarily consume rodents and do not eat plants or insects. Feed your python appropriately sized rodents (preferably frozen/thawed mice or rats), such that prey items are no larger than the widest circumference of the snake. Young pythons can be offered food weekly, while adults can be fed bi-weekly or twice monthly. Rodents may be offered off of tongs.

Do not handle your snake for at least a day after feeding to reduce the risk of regurgitation. It is not uncommon for healthy pythons to undergo seasonal fasting, or to not eat while shedding. Continue your husbandry routine as usual and keep handling to a minimum. Try offering your snake food every 10-14 days until your snake is interested in eating again. If your snake continues to be disinterested in food in addition to losing weight, then you may need to reevaluate your husbandry and/or schedule a vet appointment.

Handling & Temperament

As a standard, do not handle your snake until it has settled into its new home. This may take at least 2 weeks. Once your snake has settled, has been observed exploring its enclosure freely, and has eaten at least once, begin handling. But be warned, green tree pythons are notoriously unpredictable in behavior and may not always appreciate being handled! If you are concerned about whether your python enjoys handling or not, assume that it does not, and allow it to be a beautiful animal to display in your home.