



Jungle Bob's Care Sheet

Western Hognose Snakes

(*Heterodon nasicus*)

General Information

Despite its dramatic threat display, this somewhat “theatrical” snake is quite harmless - in fact, it plays dead if the display fails to scare off its attacker! Western Hognose Snakes make fine, long-lived pets (to 20+ years of age) for both novices and experienced keepers.

The Western Hognose is found from southern Canada to central Mexico. It favors grasslands, meadows, farms and other habitats with loose soil into which it can burrow.

Adults are stout in build and reach 15-32 inches in length. The dorsal surface varies from reddish-gray to tan or brown, and is marked with dark blotches. A wide variety of color morphs have been produced by hobbyists. The upturned snout serves as an effective “spade”, and is used to unearth burrowing prey.

Housing

A 20-30 gallon aquarium makes a good home for a single adult. The tank's screen lid should be secured by cage clips. Western Hognose Snakes are best housed on [aspen or a similar substrate](#) that allows for burrowing. Some individuals will also utilize a [reptile cave](#).



Temperatures should range from 75-80 F, with a basking site of 90 F. You can reach the desired temperature with [Jungle Bob's Basking](#) and [Night Spot Bulbs](#). [Reptile Heat Pads](#) are also useful for creating basking sites, and as a night-time heat source. A great way to determine if your terrarium is at the correct temperature is to use the [Zoo Med Digital Terrarium Thermometer](#). The substrate should remain dry.

Diet

Hognose snakes feed on pinkie and fuzzy mice as babies and juveniles. As your snake grows it will soon move up to adult mice. Hatchlings can be fussy, but often accept a pink mouse scented with tuna oil as their first meal. Drinking water should be available in a tip-proof bowl.

We recommend that you feed baby and juvenile hognose snakes one time per week. Adult hognose snakes can be fed once every 7-10 days to maintain proper body weight. Like most snakes, they typically will not eat when preparing to shed. Rodents can injure or kill your snake and should, therefore, never be offered alive.

Cleaning and Handling

The terrarium should be cleaned regularly and fecal matter removed as necessary. A monthly substrate replacement will help maintain your pet's good health. The inside of the terrarium can be cleaned out with an appropriate reptile cage cleaner; we recommend Natural Chemistry's Healthy Habitat.

Western Hognose Snakes can be carefully handled on a daily basis. Always wash your hands before and after handling any animal.

Fun Fact

The Eastern Hognose Snake, a close relative, is a confirmed toad-eater, but its western cousin is quite the opposite, readily consuming mice, birds, toads, and even carrion with equal relish (don't worry, pets do fine on mice alone!).

Jungle Bob's Reptile World
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www.JungleBobsReptileWorld.com

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