

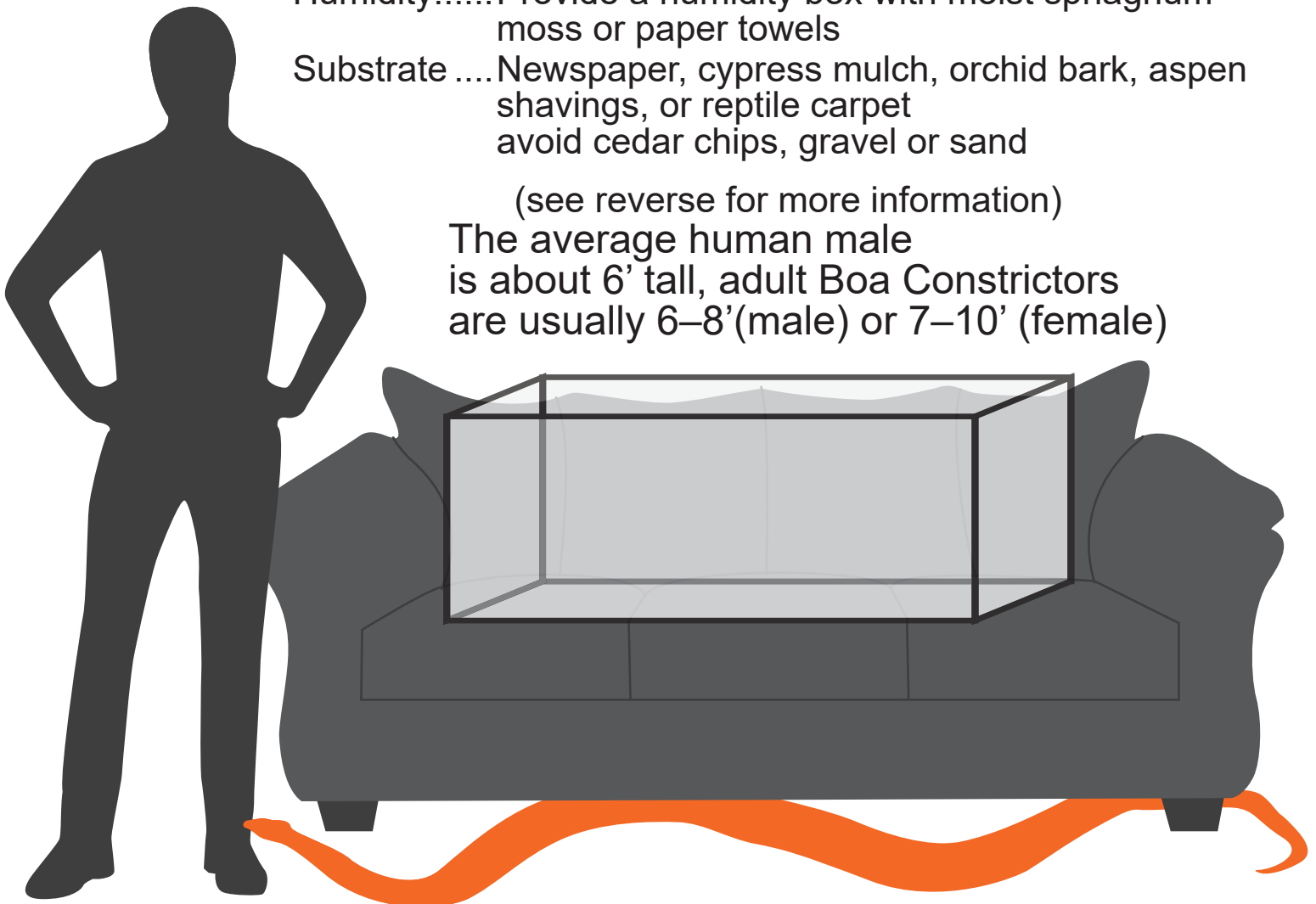
Boa Constrictor

Scientific Name: *Boa constrictor*

- Lifespan Roughly 20–30 years; record ~40 years
- Diet Carnivore only, needs whole animal prey
- Lighting Not necessary, heat can be achieved by heat pads only
- Temps Ambient cage temperature 75 F, with “hot area” of 85 to 95 F. Provide heat gradient
- Humidity Provide a humidity box with moist sphagnum moss or paper towels
- Substrate Newspaper, cypress mulch, orchid bark, aspen shavings, or reptile carpet
avoid cedar chips, gravel or sand

(see reverse for more information)

The average human male is about 6' tall, adult Boa Constrictors are usually 6–8' (male) or 7–10' (female)



The average couch is about 86”W, the minimum size enclosure for one adult Boa Constrictor is 48”W x 24”D

For more information, visit: www.mnherpsoc.org



Boa Constrictor

In the Wild

Size

- 6 – 8 ft for males; 7 – 10 ft for females, females are typically larger and heavier than males

Distribution

- Central America through the northern half of South America and associated islands. Introduced populations in southern Florida and St. Croix in the US Virgin Islands

Habitat

- Primarily tropical rainforest, some populations arid semidesert

Habits

- Frequently shelters in mammal burrows or in trees
- Harmless, temperament varies greatly from very docile to aggressive
- Primarily nocturnal • Adults mostly terrestrial, but may spend time in water, juveniles more arboreal

Diet

- Rodents, lizards, birds, and birds' eggs; subdues prey by constriction

Captive Care

Housing

- 48" X 24" or equivalent area minimum for adults. For young snakes, use 10 or 20 gallon tank or equivalent area.
- Secure, tight-fitting lid or door is necessary
- Substrate can be newspaper, cypress mulch, orchid bark, aspen shavings, reptile carpet, avoid cedar chips, gravel or sand!
- Sturdy water dish – water must be available at all times, enough area for soaking if possible
- Two hide boxes (warm side, cool side)

Temperature and Lighting

- Ambient cage temperature 75 F, with "hot area" of 85 to 95 F. Provide heat gradient
- "Hot area" can be achieved by using radiant heat, heat pad on outside of cage, or both
- Lighting not necessary, heat can be achieved by heat pads only
However, lighting can be dome lamp with incandescent bulbs for heat as well - 12 hr cycle
- UVB lighting beneficial, but not necessary
- Thermometer (temp gun or probe) to measure actual temperature is a necessity
- Adjustable temperature heat pads, thermostat and/or rheostats for any heat source is beneficial

Diet

- Carnivore only, needs whole animal prey
Frozen/thawed mice, rats, rabbits, chickens, whole prey cased links as alternative*
- Feed once a week especially for juveniles, twice or once a month of a larger prey size for adults is OK, and may even be preferred
- Avoid feeding live prey • Supplemental vitamins and minerals generally not necessary

Special Notes

- Susceptible to snake mites – difficult to detect and eradicate in some boas
- Prone to infectious stomatitis (mouth rot, nose rub) due to rubbing snout on enclosure and/or lid
- Improper shedding and/or retained eye caps due to low/improper humidity is a common problem
- Widely bred in captivity; many different captive produced color morphs known
- ~9 or 10 subspecies of boa constrictor recognized, other names include common boa, red-tailed boa, Colombian red-tailed boa, etc. not all are synonyms for the same type of snake

For more information, visit: www.mnherpsoc.org

