

Common Name: Rosy Boa

Scientific Name: *Lichanura trivirgata*



IUCN Red list Status: Least concern

AZA Conservation Program: None

Class: Reptilia

Order: Squamata

Family: Lichanura

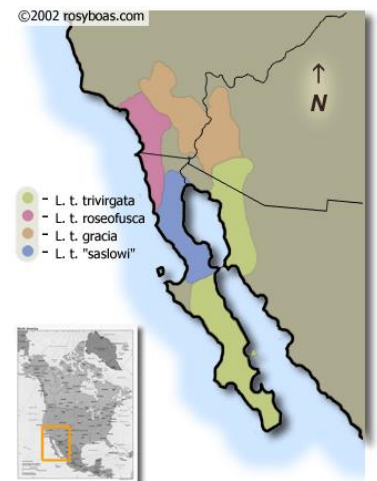
Genus: Lichanura

Habitat/Range: This species lives in southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico. It occurs at elevations from sea level to 2,070 m. Its habitats are diverse and include desert, arid scrub, brushland, sandy plains, rocky slopes, and chaparral-covered foothills, particularly where moisture is available, as around springs, streams, and canyon floors (but these snakes are not dependent on permanent water). This is a mainly terrestrial species, but it sometimes climbs into shrubs. Rosy boas are one of only two boa species native to North America, sharing that distinction with the rubber boa.

Physical Characteristics: The rosy boa is quite small. Adults range in size from 2 to 3 feet, with females being dramatically larger than males. Their bodies come in cream, buff, or gray. They also have three stripes that range from black to orange. This correlates with their scientific name "*Lichanura trivirgata*", translating to "Finger-like tail" and "Three stripes". Everything on them is generally smaller, including a head that is not much wider than their neck and their eyes which have vertical pupils. They also do not have large plate-like scales that most boas have.

Reproduction: Rosy Boa has a long reproductive cycle because it hibernates during winter. Males and females mate for approximately one week to ensure female fertilization. After mating, males return to their hideouts. During the entire pregnancy period, females consume no or less food, thus remain inactive or docile.

One unique feature associated with the Rosy Boa female is that it gives birth to young ones. Rosy Boas gives birth to an average of six to thirteen young ones. It displays an ovoviviparous mode of reproduction. The size of young ones born has an average length of six inches. Young ones develop fast before the subsequent winter season. They attain full maturity within four years of rapid development.



Common Name: Rosy Boa

Scientific Name: *Lichanura trivirgata*

Longevity: 15+ years. In captivity, they have been known to live 20-30 years or longer.

Diet: In the wild, rosy boas feed on small mammals including mice, rats, and birds. At the zoo they eat mice. Like other boas and pythons, desert rosy boas can lay virtually motionless and undetected for long periods of time, waiting for prey to pass within striking distance. When in range, the boa strikes out in a single, explosive motion, using its many backward-curved teeth to grab hold of the prey. Quickly wrapping the prey up in the coils of the snake's stout, muscular body, it squeezes until the animal is unable to breathe and dies. Prey is then swallowed whole by the snake.

Miscellaneous: A nocturnal species, it takes refuge underground during the day and comes out at night to hunt. They hide in rodent burrows or bury themselves in sand or loose soil. If a rosy boa can't hide from a predator, it will try to fool its enemy by making its tail appear to be its head. The boa curls itself into a ball, with its head in the center, raising its tail and moving it back and forth to create the appearance of a snake head ready to strike.

Docent Animal Specifics: Arnold is about 20 years old.

References:

https://www.hoglezoo.org/meet_our_animals/animal_finder/desert_rosy_boa/

<https://aaric.org/2018/09/10/rosy-boa/>

