Corn Snake Care Sheet



(*Pantherophis guttatus*)

Size: 3-5 feet

Life Span: 15-20+ years

# Enclosure & Habitat

## *Enclosure Size*

* Juveniles: 20-gallon long tank (30” x 12” x 12” minimum)
* Adults: 40-gallon tank or larger (36” x 18” x 18” or larger)

A secure lid is essential, as corn snakes are adept escape artists.

## *Substrate*

* Reptisoil; Naturalistic dirt substrate that can hold humidity.
* Paper towels: Great for ease of cleaning, especially for hatchlings or during quarantine.
* Coconut fiber or cypress mulch: Suitable for humidity control, but avoid pine or cedar, which are toxic.

Spot clean soiled areas daily and replace all substrate every 3-4 months.

## *Temperature & Heating*

Corn snakes require a thermal gradient.

* Warm side: 85°F
* Cool side: 75°F
* Nighttime temps: Can drop to 70°F, but not lower.

Use an under-tank heating pad regulated by a thermostat, heat bulb, or ceramic heat emitter to achieve this. Do not use heat rocks, as they can cause burns.

## *Humidity*

Maintain humidity at 40-60%. Provide a larger water dish or mist the enclosure lightly during shed cycles. Proper humidity helps ensure healthy shedding and respiratory health.

## *Hides and Enrichment*

Provide at least two hides, one on the warm side and one on the cool side so your snake can regulate its body temperature while feeling secure. Add branches for climbing, artificial or live plants, cork bark, and tunnels for enrichment and stimulation.

# Shedding

Corn snakes shed every 4-8 weeks, depending on age and growth. A blue or opaque appearance indicates an impending shed. Increase humidity and provide a moist hide to help.

# Handling & Temperament

Corn snakes are gentle and rarely bite. Allow a new snake a week or more to acclimate before handling. Begin with short, gentle sessions and always support the snake’s body. Avoid sudden movements. Younger snakes may be more nervous but usually become tame with patience.

# Feeding

## *Diet*

* Hatchlings: Pinky mice
* Juveniles: Fuzzy or hopper mice
* Adults: Adult mice or small rats

## *Feeding Schedule*

* Hatchlings: Every 5-7 days
* Juveniles: Every 7-10 days
* Adults: Every 10-14 days

Do not handle your snake for 48 hours after feeding to avoid regurgitation.

# Health and Common Problems

## *Common Health Issues*

* Respiratory infections: Wheezing, bubbles from nose/mouth, lethargy, often caused by poor husbandry or low temps.
* Mites: Tiny black dots, excessive soaking; treat with reptile-safe mite sprays and clean enclosure thoroughly.
* Shedding problems: Retained skin or eye caps; improve humidity and provide rough surfaces for rubbing.
* Regurgitation: Often from feeding too large a meal, stress, or handling after feeding.

**Vet Care:** If you notice your corn snake is lethargic, not eating for excessive periods of time, losing weight, struggling to move or breathe, consider reaching out to any of the following vets:

* Exotic Bird Hospital on Beach Blvd. (904) 256-0043
* Riverside Animal Hospital Downtown (904) 388-3494
* Birch Island Veterinary Center on Philips Hwy. (904) 717-6840
* Forever Vets Animal Hospital on Bartram Market Dr. (904) 490-8228