

# Boa constrictor

Prohibited invasive animal

Look. Report. Protect. 13 25 23



- It is illegal to import, keep, breed or sell boa constrictors in Queensland.
- Colour ranges from cream, tan, green, red and yellow. Some can have distinctive red on their tails.
- Prey on small mammals and reptiles.
- Prolific breeders and can carry new diseases into Australia.
- Early detection and reporting helps protect Queensland's natural environment.

## Description

The boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*) is a large snake that can grow up to 4 m and can weigh up to 30 kgs. Females are generally larger in both length and girth than males. Boa constrictors are found in North, Central, and South America. Colouring of boa constrictors can vary greatly. They are generally brown, grey or cream in colour, with brown or reddish brown saddle patterns that become more pronounced towards the tail. Boa constrictors have an arrow-shaped head that has very distinctive stripes on it. One runs dorsally from the snout to the back of the head. The others run from the snout to the eyes and then from the eyes to the jaw. Boa constrictors constrict their prey restricting movement and causing suffocation. Boa constrictors prey on small mammals, birds and other reptiles. Boa constrictors are similar in appearance to our Australian native pythons.

## Biosecurity risk

The boa constrictor is a prohibited invasive animal under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. Prohibited species must be reported immediately to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23. You cannot keep a boa constrictor as a pet in Queensland. Penalties may apply.

Boa constrictors are very adaptable and survive in a wide range of habitats. A single pregnant female is capable of starting a new population. A female boa constrictor on average bears 50 live young where Australian pythons lay around 30 eggs. Boa constrictors have become a pest animal problem overseas and, if naturalised in Queensland, could spread disease to our native pythons and compete with our native pythons for food.

## What should I do?

If you think you have seen a boa constrictor, report it immediately to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or scan the QR code to access our reporting web page. Until an authorised officer contacts you, please take reasonable and practical steps to prevent the boa constrictor from escaping, such as shutting doors or windows to contain the animal but only if safe to do so. Do not handle if not a trained or professional snake-catcher.

## More information

Contact Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or visit [biosecurity.qld.gov.au](http://biosecurity.qld.gov.au).

